# THE ANCHOR of FAITH.

Vpon which,

A Christian may Repose in all manner of *Temptations*.

*Especially in that Great and Dangerous Gulfe of* DESPERATION.

Wherein so many ouer-whelmed with the weight and Burthen of their *Sinne*, and not resting themselues *by the Hand of Faith*, vpon the Promises and Inuitations of CHRIST, haue with *Caine* and *Iudas* most fearefully fallen and shipwrackt themselues, to the vtter Confusion both of *Body* and *Soule* for euer.

---

PROV. 18. 14.

*The Body will beare his infirmitie; but a Broken and Wounded Spirit Who can beare.*

St. August. *in lib. de Vtilitate pœnitentiæ agendæ.*

Least wee should increase our sinnes by despayring, the gate of Repentance is set open vnto vs.

Least by presuming, the day of our Death is concealed from vs.

---

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367.01

# A PREFACE TO THE Christian Reader.

IT is a Wonder of the World, a wonder to bee seriously marked, and diligently considered of; and a wonder being seriously marked, and diligently considered of, worthy to bee deepely wayed, and inwardly to bee laid vp in mens hearts as a thing most necessary, profitable, and auaileable to Christian piety, and euerlasting felicity both of soule and body, to see and to thinke of it, how carefull, watchfull, diligent, earnest, and painfull, almost all the world euery where is to auoyde, to preuent, to cure, and to remedy, all such troubles, crosses, griefes, maladies, infirmities, and sicknesses as do or may befall the body: And on the other

The thing bee dred seriou to be sidere

ſide to ſee, or finde ſo few watchfull, carefull, and painefull to auoid, preuent, cure or expel the moſt dangerous wounds of the Spirit, the troubles of the conſcience, or deſperation, a miſchiefe, of all other miſchiefes, moſt needfull to be looked into.

ſe- thing bee ndred nd ſe- ſly to n i- d of.

It is a wonder to ſee, and conſider how many there are in the World, which either loath and are affraide of bodily ſicknes, or loue & like health, will ſend for and ſeeke, run and ride after bodily Phiſitions, and enquire after the beſt, the moſt expert & moſt skilfull of them, to learne by their direction, and to bee aduiſed by their counſaile (though it coſt their purſe full deare) how to purge and auoide ſuch corrupt humours as may breede (though not preſently bring forth) noyſome diſeaſes, and ſickneſſes: how carefull and how ſcrupulous they are to keepe a temperate order and a dyet in eating and drinking: and how moderate they will be in ſleepe, and all

other

other bodily exercises: And on the other side, how few there bee in the World that will either abate their sleepe, forgoe their pleasures, abridge their dyets, or seeke after the spirituall Phisition, or prepare Phisicke to purge and expell those dangerous & peccant humors, of notorious and hainous sinnes which in time will both breede & bring forth the most deadly disease of Desperation, the very Peste of soule and body for euer.

The thing bee dred

It is a wonder to see, how many abhorre, and are affraid of worldly pouerty, and for the auoiding thereof, and for the loue and liking of transitory riches, will with great carke and care rise vp early, and late take their rest: they will fare hardly, and go clad full barely: they will hazard both bodies and soules; they will toyle and teare their flesh in vnmeasurable labours by land and sea, bee the weather faire, bee it foule, *per mare pauperiem fugientes, per saxa, per ignes*: And yet

on the other ſide, how few can abide any coſtes charges or paines, to eſcape and remedie ſpirituall decayes, to auoyde pouerty of conſcience, or in time before it be too late, to beware that they be not plunged ere they be aware into the moſt deadly and diueliſh gulph of Deſperation; as though ſaluation, and peace of a godly conſcience, were a matter not worthy the talking of, or labouring for.

It is a lamentable thing to behold, how many in the world will vndertake and attempt any thing, bee it neuer ſo chargeable & troubleſome, not ſluggiſh nor ſleepie, not careleſſe and ſlothfull, but moſt earneſt and watchfull moſt careful and painefull, at euery aſſay, by Prudence and proweſſe, by witte and by warineſſe, by counſaile and by cunning, by learning and by labouring, ambitiouſly to hunt gaine, and gape after honor, and vnfatigably ſeeke to attaine fame, and highly account of it to be gazed on, & talked

of

of, with the eyes and tongues of all men. And againe, how few take any care at all, or once endeauour themselues to auoyd shame & confusion in the presence of the Almighty, to become glorious in the sight of GOD and his Angels, and to vse and exercise any of those good meanes and instruments ordained and appointed of God for the increase of Faith, Hope, and Charity: and for the weakening and abandoning of all desperation and diffidence in Gods infinite mercies, and infallible promises.

It is a lamentable thing to marke and consider how vigilant careful, and heedfull many of the wiser, and circumspecter sort of men of this world will bee to escape, and auoyd all the penalties, paines, and punishments prouided and set downe, for offenders of mortall mens lawes; how painefull they will be in Penall Statutes, & how skilfull in euery branch of the Ciuill Lawes, least they should ignorantly

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incurre the dangers of imprisonment, of losse of landes, forfeytures of their goods or death it selfe.

Many haue greater care of mortall mens lawes then of Gods lawes.

But the mighty God, the only highest Law-giuer, that Lord of Lordes, and King of all Kings, Let him ordeyne, publish, and proclaime his Lawes, Statutes, and Ordinances, to be hearkned vnto, obserued, and kept, and that vnder neuer so rigorous and Seuere conditions, punishments, and penalties: How few men will search his Booke of Statutes and Lawes? How few are affraid of his, not temporary, but euerlasting threatninges and punishments, contained in his Lawes? and how few men regard, esteeme, and thankfully embrace his couenant of reconciliation, set forth in his most ioyfull, and comfortable Gospell?

And yet most certaine it is, that all these aforesaid things so much to bee wondred at, and so greatly to bee lamented for: so lightly looked on, so

finally

ſmally regarded, and ſo little thought on, & many ſuch other of the like fraternity and order of diſorders, & ſins being delighted in, and ſecurely continued in, without all care or indeauour to forſake them in time, by repentance, & true returning to the Lord, doe firſt breed or ingender, and afterwards bring forth Deſperation; then the which, all the Furies, and Diuells in hell, cannot lightly excogitate nor find out a greater torment or a more intolerable paine, and that becauſe that all other torments, penalties, and paines are but temporall, and purſue men no further then bodily death; but this endeth not with bodily death, but becommeth eternall. Whoſoeuer then he bee, that is once ſurely catcht in this net of deſperation, hee needes no mo accuſers to come againſt him, then his former vnrepented ſinnes, which lye at the doore to arreſt him; his owne heart will giue euidence againſt him, and his owne iniquity

will

wil plead him to be guilty, and that to his owne face.

Vpon consideration of these things I haue now in this treatise following, (good Christian Reader) endeuoured my selfe to set downe, First, a definition of Desperation; then the grieuousnesse thereof: after this, certaine principall causes thereof: together with remedies for the same: and lastly a generall preseruatiue against Desperation, arising of what cause soeuer: To the intent, that the Children of God, falling by some occasions into some degrees of it, (for if it rage in extremities, in the opinion of some learned Writers, it is an euill incurable, and vnrecouerable) may with the more ease and quietnesse bee recouered, and saued as it were out of the Diuels clawes; euen out of as great danger as euer were the poore Sheepe that *Dauid* tooke out of the Beares or Lions mouth. 1 Sa, 17.

Accept heereof (gentle Reader) with

h no worſe a minde, then I haue at-
mpted to bee the Writer; and then
oubt not, but it ſhall either mini-
r vnto thine heart ſome comforta-
ble Phyſicke, or elſe giue thee
occaſion to ſeeke, reade,
or collect a
better.

*Thine in all Chriſtian affection.*

W. W.

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# Of Desperation.

## CHAPTER. 1

The first Chapter conteyning the Definition, and Diuision of Desperation.

M. T. Cicero, that most worthy Father of the Roman eloquẽce was of that mind, that euery thinge which was to be reasoned & disputed of, should first begin at the definition thereof, that so it might briefly be vnderstood what the substance of the matter was wherof reasoning or disputation was to be holden: Of the like opinion and minde am I at this present, concerning the dangerous pestе of most wicked and damnable Desperation; being the matter which now I haue in hand (through Gods assistance) to write of.

A definition of euery thing which is to be disputed or reasoned of, is necessary and wherfore.

Definition of Desperation is of two sorts.

The Definition then of Desperation I finde and read to bee of two sortes as concerning the wordes, and yet in sense and substance of matter little differing one from the other: Whereof the one is, Desperatio est horribilis mentis & cordis seu cõscientiæ trepidatio ex sensu iræ diuinæ propter peccatum concepta cum metu æternæ damnationis, sine vlla expectatione veniæ: Desperation is an horrible feare, or trembling of the mind and heart or conscience, conceiued through a sence and feeling of Gods wrath for sin; with a feare of eternal damnation, without all expectation or hope of pardon or forgiuenesse thereof.

The first Definition of Desperation.

The other (which is a far more ancient Definition) is this Desperatio est malum quo quis diffidit de volũtate dei, æstimãs malitiam suã magnitudinẽ diuinæ misericordiæ & bonitatis excedere. Desperation is an euil through which a man mistrusting despaireth vtterlie, & is past all hope of the good will of God, verily thinking that his naughtines, or sins, excell the mercies and goodnes of God, according to that saying of the first desperat man Cain: Mine iniquitie is greater

The secõd Definition of desperation.

greater then can be pardoned. Gen 4.13 Gen. 4.13

Thus it being made plaine and easie what desperation is by these aforesaid Definitions, it followeth in the next place, (to proceed after the same order that the said Cicero vsed) that I speak of diuision of Desperation; which I likewise finde and read to be of two kinds: the one a wicked kind of Desperation of Gods promises, power, goodnes & mercy towards sinners, the matter which here I am to entreat of: The other an holy Desperation of a mans owne power, in the obtaining of eternall life, conceiued and wrought by a sense or feeling of a mans owne defects, infirmitie, & corruptions. Concerning this former kinde of Desperation, being especially the marke which I would haue poore silly distressed soules to haue a diligent and a watchfull eye vnto, to the intent that both my selfe, and my poore brethren, liuing and warring yet with mee in the militant Church of Christ here on earth, may be the better fore-warned (for that as they say Tela præuisa minus nocent) of this most subtil and deadly stratageme, concerning this

Two kinds of Desperation the one wicked the other holy.

most dangerous and fatal assaulting engine, of the Arch-enemy of our soules, this deepe dispayre and diuelish soule-poyson, I haue thought good by the penning of this short Treatise, to put my selfe and others in remembrance of these three points; to wit, first of the haynousnesse, grieuousnesse, and pernitiousnes of Desperation. Secondly, of the causes thereof: and thirdly of the remedies.

Three thinges especially to be noted in this Treatise of Desperation.

## CHAP. 2.

The second Chapter, wherin is described how hainous, grieuous, hurtfull, and pernitious, the sinne of Desperation is

IN sundry and manifold places of holy Scriptures are we taught, that God is faithfull, faithfull in his words, and true in all his promises: All the promises of God are Yea and amen: Faithfull in his mercies, for they neuer fayle. Faithfull, Iust, & True are his waies according to the song of the holy Angells. Reu. 15. 3. Yea moreouer, God is carefull for the Faithfull, and hath promise

1 Cor. 1. 9
2. Thes. 3 3
1 Ioh. 1. 9
2 Co. 1. 20

GOD is constant & faithfull: & how, and wherein.

promised to be their God, and they shall be his people. It is thy duty therfore, O Man! to doe GOD this honour, to believe without all wauering, doubting, or despairing; that GOD hath both Power and Will to doe all thinges that hee promiseth, and not to permit any such cogitations, thought, or conceite, once to enter into thine heart, as that God should proue himselfe a lyer; or that it should not come to passe, which he hath promised. But if thou once suffer the distrust and diffidence in Gods promised mercies (through the multitude of thy sinnes, and the grieuousnesse of thine offences, through the nature of sinne it selfe and the crafty ingestion and suggestion of Satan) to take hold of, and possesse thine heart: O horrible and grieuous is this last sin of Despayring which thou addest to thy former sinnes. so hainous, so hurtfull and pernitious, is this thy sin of Diffidence and distrust in Gods mercies to be obtained, according to his promised word, that I may ly of thee, as S. Augustine said of Iudas the traytor, Non tam scelus quod commisisti quam indulgentiæ desperatio facit

Reu 15. 3
2Cor. 6. 18

The duty of the faithfull towards god in regard of Gods faithfulnes towards him.

The horriblenes of the sinne of Diffidence, Mistrust, or Desperation,

*Aug in lib de vtilitate pœnitentiæ agendæ.*

re penitus interire: Not so much the sin which thou hast done, as thy despayr of forgiuenesse, hath vtterly cast the away. Surely Iudas his despayre and distrust (according to S. Augustine his opinion) was a more grieuous sin, then his treason in the betraying of his Maister. Wher-vnto agreeth S. Iero.. Magis inquit offendit deum Iudas, in hoc quod desperando seipsũ suspendit, quam in hoc quod dẽ tradidit. Desperatio enim reddit hominem maledictum, et protectione dei indignum. Iudas (saith S. Ierome) more offended God herein, that in dispayre he hanged himselfe, then in that hee betrayed his Lord and Maister: For Desperation maketh a man accursed, vnworthy Gods protection. And thus likewise Cain his dispayring in Gods mercy after his murther committed was a more grieuous sinne, then the shedding of his brother Abell his blood: For to adde Despayre to former sinnes, is to drawe sinne after sinne as it were with Cart-ropes, to heape sinne vpon sinne, to fulfill the measure of iniquitie, and so to purchase swift and most certaine damnat-

Ier. super Psa. 108.

on, It is indeede the fashion and olde wont of Sathan, to perswade man (when hee hath once committed many haynous sinnes) after his owne sinnes, to despayre, and so to commit the greater sinne after the lesser: which is as if an vnlearned ignorant ond a murthering Physition should cause his Patient for the remedying of a little cold taken to drinke the iuyce of Hemlocke which by adding cold to cold, is most sure to bring present death; Or as if a man, hauing an Ache in one of his fingers, should cut off the whole hand to take away the Ache of a finger. Euen such like Phisicke and Surgery doth the Diuell practise to minister vnto lewde and wilfull sinnors, when hee inticeth and draweth them after many precedent haynous sinnes, through despayre of finding mercie and forgiuenesse to shorten their liues, by killing and murthering themselues, by poysoning, by stabbing, by throat-cutting, by drowning, by Iudas-like hanging of themselues; & finally by casting off all vse of faith, all vse of hope, and so

When especially the Diuell beginneth to tempt to despayre.

Note what kinde of phisick and surgery the Diuell practiseth.

quite to despayre of Gods mercy: then the which, what can be a more dangerous course for any man to yeeld vnto? What can be more foolish or contrary to all reason, if a mans reason were not blinded and bewitched that hee could not see, nor perceiue, nor consider well of it, then whiles a man is afraid of water, presently to cast her selfe headlong into it, and so seeingly and wittingly to drowne himselfe: or then whiles a man is afraid of fire, presently to runne into it and to dispatch himselfe therein: Or whiles a man is afraid of hell fire, out of hand most desperately to plunge himselfe into the daungers thereof?

The absurd dealings of such as easily yeeld to desperation.

And yet such as these are the perswasions, and temptations of the Diuell, to a man whose barking conscience continually pangeth and plagueth him for his sinnes.

* Marke this O man, least thou yeeld to Desperation before thou be aware what great inconueniences thou yeeldest vnto.

Such as these are the fruites of the most monstrous sinne of dispayring of Gods mercy and grace.

Way not he be accounted worse then madd, * that is so forward and ready to yeeld vnto, and to follow after the Diuells

uells whistle, alluring and entising vnto desperation, seeing it is no meanes to diminish, but to encrease sinne, and the rewards of sinne, seeing that it is no reliefe, but an euerlasting burthen and griefe of the soule: seeing that it is not a deliuery of the soule, but a certaine destruction of the soule: seeing it is not a redemption, but an vndoubted condemnation of soule and body for euer.

And finally, seeing that it changeth temporall griefe into eternall griefe, and the panges of conscience, into the paines of hell for euer. And thus is verified that saying of S. Bernard, Desperatio auget peccatum, Desperatio maior est omnibus peccatis, Desparatio peior est omni peccato, Desperation encreaseth sin: Desperation is greater then al other sinnes, Desperation is worse then all other sinnes.

*Saint Bernard his opinion concerning the heinousnes of desperation.*

This is a thousand times worse then the dangerous rocke Scilla, against which so many poore Marriners haue dashed their shippes, to the great losse both of Shippes, goodes and liues: or then that no lesse dangerous gulfe Charybdis

*Scilla and Charybdis not so dangerous as desperation.*

rybdis, which haue deuoured vp ſo many paſſengers: For at this vnfortunate and deadly rocke of Deſperation, many thouſands of poore ſoules ouercharged with the burthen of their iniquities, and turmoyled in their conſciences with the waues of fearefull thoughts, and troubleſome conceites by the bluſtring blaſtes and ſurgie ſtormes of Gods vengeance threatned againſt ſinners, both haue and dayly doe make dangerous and fearefull ſhip-wracke. This is a worſe dungeon for both ſoules and bodies of poore deſperate ſinners: then was the Denne of Lyons, into the which the Rulers, Officers, and Gouernours of King Da-
Dan. 6. 17 rius cauſed Daniell to be caſt, and cloſed vppe: Yea, and this is ſeauen times
Dan. 3. 19 worſe then the ſeauen times heated burning Duen or Furnace, into the which that proud Idolatrous King Nabuchadnezzer commanded Sidrach, Miſach, and Abednago, the true ſeruants and worſhippers of the onely true and euerliuing God, to be caſt in. This is that incurable, remedileſſe, and deſperate ſore, wound and maladie, which the

Prophets

Prophets of God Ieremy and Micheas, Ier. 3. Mic. 1.
in their dayes complained of among their people. This is that great stop & let, that hindereth and resisteth Gods holy grace from flowing and entring into the soules of sinfull men. This is the Axe that heweth and choppeth a sunder the chaines wherewith God in his great mercy, and mercifull kindnesse, would drawe the hearts of sinners vnto himselfe by Repentance; whereof speaketh the Prophet Ozeas. Oze. 11.
Trust in the Lord, and doe good, saith the holy Ghost by the Prophet Dauid: where hee placeth and setteth Trust in GOD in the first place, and doing good in the second: trusting in GOD, goeth before as the Mistris, and doing good followeth & attendeth on as the Hand-maide: For as it is said Spes alit agricolas, were it not for Hope the Husbandmans heart would burst; Hope nourisheth his heart: Euen so Despayre and diffidence, or distrust in GOD, is a Step-mother to well doing, and draweth backe from doing good; according to the saying of a learned Writer vpon the said 37. Psal. Psal. 37. 3

Despe-

*Musculus in Psal. 37. 3*

Desperatio & diffidentia abstrahit ab omni studio boni, nam cogitat omnia fieri frustra: ita namque ex spe et fiducia promanant mortaliū conatus, vt ex ipsis conatibus satis liqueat quid quisque sperat.

Desperation and Mistrust drawe th back from all desire of well doing, for it thinketh all to be but lost labour: for so doe all mens labours and endeauours flowe and spring from Hope and trust, that euery mans doings doe plainly testifie what he hopeth or trusteth for.

*Desparation draweth men back from all wel doing and why.*

And now let this suffice briefely to giue a taste how great and grieuous, hurtfull and pernitious this sinne of Desperation is.

## CHAP. 3.

The third Chapter conteining the chiefest and most principall causes of Desperation.

That memorable and notable saying of S. Gregory in one of his Homilies, moueth mee to thinke, and here to commit it to writing, that one cause of Desperation, and not the least, but rather

rather the primary and principall cause of all other ariseth from the subtile, cunning and cosoning counsell, inducement, perswasion, and allurement of the Diuell: for saith S. Gregory, Quum in graui peccato miser homo labitur: suadet ei diabolus ne peniteat, ne cõfiteatur peccatum leue et modicum in corde affirmat, misericordiam prædicat, longum spaciũ vitæ promittit, permanere in peccato suggerit, vt sic in contemptum dei, & desperationem sui inducat & pereat: When wretched man slippeth into some grieuous sinne, the Diuells councell is, that he repent not at al for it, that he confesse it not: hee tells him in his heart, that it is but a light and small offence: hee saies God is full of mercie, hee promiseth him long life, he suggesteth vnto him to lie still in sinne, that by these meanes hee may bring him at last into contempt of God, and into vtter Desperation, and so hee may become a castaway for euer. Here doth S. Gregory in most manifest and plaine words describe and decipher the Diuell himselfe to bee the author and so consequently the cheefest causer, and cause, of this horrible

*Greg. in quadam Hom.*

The degrees by which the Diuell drawveth men on into desperation.

ble soule murthering Desperation; and here also doth he set down by what steppes and degrees hee brings and leades a poore careleſſe wretched man into despayre.

Now consider this moreouer, that
Iob. 1. if Satan that arch-enemy of mans welfare, durſt very boldly and saucely without any bidding, presume to thruſt himselfe into Gods presence amongſt his holy Angells; if hee durſt so subtelly and cunningly, dissemblingly and lyinglie, assayle and assault our firſt
Gen. 3. Parents Adam and Eue, being yet innocents, vnstained, and pure from all sin: May more then all this, if he durſt
Mat. 4. 3. approach, and with diuers temptations assault and allure Christ Iesus himselfe, both God and Man; and yet Man free from any spot or blemish of sinne endeuoring himselfe to the vttermoſt of his skill and power if it had beene possible, to haue brought him, and wrought him to his owne wicked will: Alaſſe, is it any maruele then if he doe as diligently and buſily beſtirre himselfe with his manifould wiles, and guiles, to assaile vs weake, poore, and miserable sinners;

sinners? Who (without the dayly and howerly strengthning of Gods holy spirit) are of our selues prompt, apt and ready, euery howre to decline and fall away from God, and to fall vnto Idolatry, Blasphemy, Periury, Murther, Whoredome, Theft, Pride, Disobedience, and what not; wherin, after wee be once plunged ouer head and eares, and ouer runne with thee guilt of many sinnes, then will Sathan lay about him, and apply his businesse like a most valiant Champion, to catch vs in the most dangerous snare of all other, euen deepe Despayre: He will challenge our soules by the seuere iustice of GOD, let vs say against him whatsoeuer we can, and argue against him as long as wee will, yet will hee insult, reioyce, and reply saying: Neither Gods mercies, nor Christs merits, can any thing help, but thou must needs be damned, so lightly heretofore hast thou esteemed God, and his precepts; so small hast thou regarded Christ Iesus and his merits, or rather so willingly, wittingly, and seeingly hast thou vilipended, and contemned them;

The forerunners of desperatiō except we looke to our selues in time.

What the Diuell wil obiect against vs to bring vs to despaire

and

and so obstinately, carelesly, and desperately, troden them vnder-foote, that euen as thou hitherto hast made noe reckoning of God, and hast not opened the dooze of thy heart to receiue him, and giue him entertainment when heestood without and knocked to bee letten in there; so now God will requite thee, with Lege talionis, with like foz like: hee will make no reckoning of thee, hée will not open his eares vnto thee when thou cryest vnto him, hee will not let thee haue though thou aske, hee will not let thee finde though thou seeke, hée will not open vnto thee though thou knocke. Behold now art thou tossed like waues of the Sea, thy Faith waue-reth betweene Hope and Dread, and therefoze canst thou receiue nothing at the Lozds hands: with these and infinite such like disputations, will Sathan set vpon, and vexe the very elect of God, to bring them (if it were possible) to desperation. And if the elect shall bee thus sifted, (as Peter was) in what case then shall the wicked and repzobate bee?

CHAP.

## CHAP. 4.

The second cause of desperation.

THe second cause of Desperation, is ignorance of God, & want of knowledge of the will of God, vnto mankind reuealed by his holy word: for as ignorance of the scriptures, as it was pronoũced by the mouth of Christ Iesus himselfe speaking against the Saduces, concerning the resurrection of the dead, was the cause of that their so great error; Euen likewise the ignorance of God, is oftentimes the occasion & cause of Gods heauie displeasure; and so of diuers & sundry inconueniences and mischiefes: and amongst the rest, it is also a cause of this cursed Desperation, as writeth S. Bernard: Vtraque cognitio, dei scilicet & tui tibi necessaria est ad salutẽ, quia de ignorãtia tui venit superbia, ac de dei ignorãtia venit desperatio. The knowledg both of God, & of thy selfe are necessary vnto saluation, because out of the ignorance of thy selfe, ariseth pride; & likewise out of the ignorance of God, commeth Desperation. Out of this ignorance of God, must Desperation needs arise: for how can it otherwise be, but that hee that is

Mat. 22.

2 Kin. 17. 26.

Ps. 23. 10. 11.

Pr. 28. 29 30. 31.

Esa. 1. 34.

Hos. 4. 7.

Eph. 4. 18

Ber super Cant.

Ignorance the mother of desperation.

altogither without any knowledge of God, must despayre to receiue any good thing of him: for as no man can take pleasure nor any profit by hid and vnknowne Treasure: so no man can looke for grace, mercy, and forgiuenesse of sinnes, or any other benefit or good gift at his hands, of whom he is vtterly ignorant, and of whom he hath no knowledge.

## CHAP. 5.

The third cause of desperation.

THe third cause of Desperation is the great seruitude or bondage of sinne: with which whosoeuer is clogged, hee becommeth thereby the seruant of sinne: Iohn 8. 34. And the wofull and hurtfull effects of sinnes, are the procurements of Gods curses and plagues vpon bodyes, soules, lands, children, stocke, croppe, and euery thing else that a man hath, or goeth about at home or abroade, in towne or in field, in Citty or in Contry, by land or by water. Deu. 28. Leu. 26. Sin hardeneth the heart. Heb. 3. 13. It fighteth against ỹ soule. 1. Pet. 2. 11. It gnaweth & tormenteth the conscience. 1. Sa. 25. 31.

The wofull & hurtfull effects of sinne.

And

And bringeth men into the most damnable gulfe of Desperation, wherein multitudes of Worldlinges, Macheuillians, Epicures, & impious Atheists are dayly implunged, and irreuocably drowned for euer.

## CHAP. 6

The fourth cause of Desperation.

THe Fourth cause of Desperation do many gather to themselues vpon the wordes of Christ in Mat. 7. 13. Strait is the gate, & narrow is the way that leadeth vnto life, & few there be that find it. And againe out of Mat. 20. 16. Many are called, but few are chosen. And againe out of Luk. 13. 24. Striue to enter in at the straite gate, for many, I say vnto you, will seeke to enter in & shal not be able: All which places doe plainly teach; that few shall be saued; for in bidding to striue to enter in, Christ giueth vs to vnderstand ỹ it is no easie matter, but a matter that requireth great strife, paines, and earnest diligence against the World, the Flesh, and the Diuell.

The feare and doubt of many.

Upon these considerations, many begin to feare and to tremble, to stagger,

and no doubt, whether they may thinke themselues to be in the number of those few that shall be saued yea or no; and so are drawne into dispayre, whiles that they finde this present euil world against them with all the baytes, snares, nettes, and lets, pleasures, and profits thereof to catch them, fetter them, and intangle them, whiles they finde their own flesh, their owne corrupted nature against them; their reason poysoned, their wils and affections blinded, their naturall wisdome, concupiscences, and lusts, mistring strength to Satans temptations, taking part against them daily and howerly ready to betray them into his hands, whiles that they see and perceiue euen legions of Diuells, euen all the Diuells in hell against them, with all their crafty heades, maruailous strength, infinite wiles, cunning deuises, deep slights, and tryed temptations, lying in ambush against their poore soules; & who seeth not ỳ thousands are caried headloug to destruction through the temptations of either the world, the flesh, or ỳ diuell? And thus are we poore wretches in a most pittiful case assaulted and betraied on euery side.

The great and manifold aduersaries of mans saluation: all which the diuel vseth as meanes to Despe-ration.

CHAP.

## CHAP. 7

The fifth cause of desperation.

THe fift cause of Desperation ariseth from the manifold crosses & afflictions of this present life, for from hence it is that some men being daily feretted, followed on, & euen almost pressed down with temporall afflictions and troubles, as penury, pouerty, hunger, nakednes, sicknes of body, troubles of mind, vnquiet suggestions of the flesh, temptations of the Diuel persecutiõs, imprisonments, losse of friends, losse of goods, losse of good name and fame, a wicked, crooked, & froward mate in matrimony, disobedient & vntoward children, vnkind & vnthankfull friends, vndeserued malice, enuy, & hatred of froward neighbours, & many other such like crosses, as daily in one sort or other befal men: When they once feele themselues touched and tryed herewith, anon they take occasion hereby to cry out, and lamentably to houle, and curse the day wherein they were borne, to call that an vnhappy houre wherein their mothers brought them forth, to wish they had dyed in their birth, & that they had perished so soone as they came

Sundry kinds of crosses and afflictions.

Ier. 20.

Ier. 15.

Iob. 3.

out of their mothers wombe; that some hill might fall vpon them & ouerwhelme them that so they might shortly bee rid out of their paines: Yea they will not be perswaded that these thinges are sent of God (for the most part) to such as he loueth, but rather to such as he hateth; and that neuer a louing father wil handle his children so as they are handled. Now the Diuell most subtilly lying in wayte for his aduantage, taketh hold on this their weakenesse, and striueth by little & little by such occasiõs as these to worke vtter desperation in them; and by these meanes oftentimes forceth some to sodaine, wretched, and desperate ends.

## CHAP. 8

The first cause of Desperation.

THe first cause of Desperation is long custome of sin, whereby a man yeeldeth and submitteth himselfe as an obedient & ready bond-slaue to the Diuell, little respecting if not vtterly contemning both God and his word, whose dull conscience through giuing himselfe ouer to impurity & filthines of life, is waxed hard in iniquity, and corrupt waies, and as

as it were burned with a hot iron, so that he is now past all sense & feeling of sinn, & this long costome groweth as it were into a second nature (in processe of time) which to expell is a matter of great difficulty. This is it which the Prophet Ierim. meant, where he affirmed that it is as hard a thing for such to doe any good that haue bin continually inured with doeing of evil, as it is to wash a Blackamoore or Aetiopian skinne white: or to chang the spots of a Leopard: And therefore according to our English adage, as that which is bred in the bone, will neuer lightly out of the flesh: so an old wont or custome of any vice, be it of lying, swearing, gaming, drinking, whooring, or any other such like, will seldome or neuer be remedied; whereby it oftentimes commeth to passe, that in the end ỹ Diuel by this meanes hauing laid a foundation, so fitting his purpose to worke on, bringeth his old customers to dispaire.

Long custome groweth into a second nature.

## CHAP. 1.

The first Chapter concerning the Remedies against the temptations & assaults of Satan, being the first speciall cause of Desperation, before intreated of in Ch. 3

TO meete with the dangerous and manifould temptations of Satan, that great enemy of mankind, wherewith hee continually after other sinnes first committed, laboureth to bring vs into the deepe gulph of desperation: It shall not be amisse, nay rather it shall be our best course and remedie, to learne & practise that most sure, safe, and excellent counsaile, which the holy ghost giueth by those two worthy Apostles of our Sauiour Christ, S. Paul and S. Iames; wherof S. Paul saith, Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stād against ỹ assaults of the Diuel. & S. Iam. saith, Resist the Diuell & he will flie from you: that is to say, we must striue against all vnlawful & forbidden lusts by which hee eggeth, draweth, and haleth men from sinne to sinne, from bad to worse, and finally to desperation, the worst of all sins.

Eph: 6. Iam. 4.

Saint *Paul* & S. *Iames* their counsel against the temptations & assaults of Sathan.

Had

Had Cain thus resisted the Diuell, hee had neuer bene so far drawn (as he was) from faithlesse hypocrisie, to enuy; from enuy to murther. and from murther to Desperation. Had Iudas the traytor thus resisted the Diuel when he by his intisement first yeelded to couetousnesse, and so for a little filthy lucre to betray his most louing, gentle, and kinde Lord & Maister, he had not from those sins one in the neck of another finally fallen into despayre, wherein he became his own hang man to the euerlasting testimony of his owne damnation.

Full worthy therefore, and very néedfull in this case is S. Iames his counsaile, Resist the Diuell &c. yea and that in the beginning.

A discription of the manner of armour with which Saint Paul would haue Christians to resist the Diuell.

And S. Paul goeth further on with the like good counsaile, and setteth downe very plainely with what manner of Armour he would haue Christians to buckle and furnish themselues with, that so they may be found the more ready and able to encounter their generall enemies temptations: As first with Verity, or Truth, which is the arming of themselues with true and sincere knowledge

of

The first kind of Armour to resist the Diuell with.

of God Tit. 1. 1. In the true seruice of God with out hypocrisie, in Spirit and truth. Iosua 24. 14. Iohn 4. 24. 3. Kin. 2. 4 And likewise with vpright true speaking & dealing with our neighbours in word and deed. Eph. 4. 25. Ex. 23. 1.

The 2ecõd kinde of Armour wherwith the Diuell is to be resisted.

Secondly with the Brest-plate of righteousnes: that is, with the earnest applying and endeauouring of our selues to all vertue and godlines in our liues and conuersations: Where note, that the Apostle hauing placed Verity, Truth, or true knowledge of God, in the first place: in very fit & good ranck & order he placed this Righteousnes; ꝑ is to say practise of true knowledge in holines of life in the second place; as a godly father herevpon hath very well obserued in these words: Vera dei cognitiõe & animi sinceritate, & puritate pr mũ deinde pia et sancta vita ornari debẽt Christiani milites: Christian Souldiars ought first to haue their hearts & minds decked & furnished with true knowledge of God, with true sincerity & purity of mind; & secondly, with Godly & holy life answerable to their true knowledge. Vereby all slighty, cunning, & forcible entries

vnto

vnto Satans engines and subtile snares shalbe debarred and shut vp: hereby all the passages of our thoughts and imaginations shal be preuented and taken vp, that he shall not so easily find any breach or weake place to inuade. For as on the one side, by looseneſſe & licentiousneſſe of the flesh, by lewdneſſe of our lines, by our iniquity and vngodlines, the Diuell is animated, fleshed, and emboldened, dayly to tempt and assault vs: for he seeing in the corruption of our nature a forwardneſſe to wickednes, he bloweth the bellowes and kindleth the flame of our bad inclination; he stirreth vs vp, & pricketh vs forward, till after the heaping vp of one sinne after another, at the length he casteth vs downe headlong into ỹ bottomleſſe pit of Desperation: So on the other side by this Armour of righteousneſſe, sincerity and integrity to an holy life is the Diuell withstood and resisted, and we become the more able to stand fast in the day of our temptation: So that it is not without iust cause, that ỹ Apostle compareth this Righteousnes the second kind of spiritual Armour, vnto a corporall Braest-plate; for that like as

Whereby the Diuell is emboldened to tempt: and Whereby on the other side he is discouraged, & resisted.

The good fruites of vprightenesse, & holines of life.

a Brest-plate saueth and fenceth the vitall parts of man, as his heart, liuer, & entrailes; which once being stricken and pierced mans life is lost: so doth vprightnesse and holines of life, preserue the heart and conscience of man free & safe from the inuasion & confusion wrought by Satan from the fierie darts of infidelitie, hardnes of conscience, coldnesse in religion, wickednes of life, corruption in conuersation, & finally from Desperatiō, the very vp-shot of al mischiefs.

The third kinde of Armour for a Christian against Satan.

Thirdly, must we arme & furnish our selues to resist Satan the Diuell, with ỹ Gospell of peace, ỹ is, our hearts must be throughly acquainted, & fully fraughted with the knowledge of that glad tidings of great ioy, which the Angells of the Lord brought at the birth of Christ; that tydinges of great ioy, which must be vnto all nations, with that most comfortable & ioyfull embassage of the Reconciliation of man with God, which may ful wel be called ỹ Gospel of peace for that it onely maketh the Conscience of man quiet, & at peace with God and it selfe: then the which, what one thing in all the world, can set a man more frée

L. 2. 10.

from

from all Desperation?

The fourth Armour. 1. Cor. 16 13.

Fourthly, with Faith in Iesus Christ; wherewith the same S. Paul arming men against spirituall assaults by Sathan and his ministers, and preparing them to the spirituall battaile against the Diuell and his members, encourageth them not to shrinke, but to cleaue fast to this Faith, whereby we may resist and beat backe our spirituall enemie.

And likewise S. Peter instructing vs to prepare and make ours selues strong, to encounter with the common enemy the Diuell, teacheth vs to resist him by faith especially: Be sober (saith he) and watch, for your aduersary the Diuell, goeth about seeking whom hee may deuoure, whom resist stedfast in faith. 1. Pet. 5. 8

For this cause Saint Basil vpon the 32. Psalme saith, What man is able to make war with the Diuel, vnles he flee for help to the Captain of the Hoast through faith in him, to wound and thrust through his enemy? Basilius in Psal. 32.

And likewise S. Augustine accounted this faith to be so powerfull, that it resisteth, vanquisheth and ouer-commeth the Diuell. Aug. lib. 3 Cap 20. de lib. arbitrio.

And

What faith is

And this true Christiã Faith which is of such power as afore said, is a sure trust in the mercy of God ỹ Father through ỹ merits of Christ Iesus, when we do perswade our selues most certainly of the pardon of our sins through Christs righteousnes; and of eternall saluation by his passion, heereby obtaining peace in our consciences wᵗ God, & rest, & walke in obedience to his will & commandements by his word vnto vs reuealed. Of this kind of faith is entreated in Abac. 2. 4. Rom. 3. 38 Rom. 5 1. Ephe. 2. 8.

The fift kind of Armour

The fift kind of Armor to resist the Diuell with, whereof S. Paul in the catalogue of a Christian Souldiars armor maketh rehersal, is ỹ word of God: this is the Sword of the spirit, whereby the suggestions and wicked temptations of Sathan, are beaten backe, propelled, & kept off, euen as a man kæpeth backe his enemy at the poynt of his Sword.

With this kinde of Armour did our chiefe captaine Christ Iesus in his manhood here on earth, resist and put backe al the Diuell his subtle and faulse temptations, answering euery one of them with Scriptũ est, It is written: whence we

we may learne by the like meanes, after his most excellent example to combate with the Diuell, and to giue him the foyle, whensoeuer by him, or any his wicked instruments, we shall be tempted to this Desperation, or any other sinne whatsoeuer.

Christ himselfe an example how to resist the Diuels temptations.

If we be tempted to sweare and blaspheme the holy name of God, it is to be resisted with Sciptum est, It is written, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vaine. If to pollute and breake ỹ Lords Sabboth day through either labouring about our pleasures or profits, answer, It is written, Remember that thou kepe holy &c. If to murther, & shedding of blood, by any forbidde way or means, or vpon any vnlawfull occasiõ whatsoeuer; answere, It is written, Thou shalt doe no murther. If to steale and purloyne by any vnlawfull meanes, directly or indirectly; answere, it is written, Thou shalt not steale If we be tempted to vsury, let vs drawe out ỹ Sword of the Spirit, Thou shalt not giue to Vsury vnto thy brother, Vsury of mony, Vsury of meat or of any other thing. If he moue vs to deceipt & fraudulent

Exo. 22. 25. Deu 23. 19. Le. 25. 39 Pial. 15. 5.

dulent dealing, let vs resist him w̄, It is
1 Thes. 4. 5. written, Let no man oppress or deceaue
Leu. 25. 14 his brother in bargaining, for the Lord is
a Iudge in such things. If we be solicited
to disloyalty, & disobedience to Princes,
let vs striue against that, with, It is
Rom. 13. 1 2, 3, written, Let euery soule be subiect to
the higher powers &c. Finally to be
short to what kind of sin, mischiefe, or in-
conuenience so euer any of vs shall hap-
The Scriptures doe minister store of swords against euery kinde of temptation pen to be drawn, inticed, or inueigled, let
vs search the Scriptures, & we shal soone
finde store of swordes, of one kind or o-
ther to answer, foyle, and recoyle, what-
soeuer this mortal enemy of ours can vse
or object against vs, here is armour e-
nough to finde him occupied with.

The first kinde of spirituall Armour,
and heauenly furniture, wherewith S.
Paul, or rather the holy Ghost by Saint
The first kinde of Christian Armour. Paul, would haue vs complet and furni-
shed against all the dangerous combats,
conflicts, and wicked suggestions of this
wicked and damned spirit, thereby to
auoid, repell, & vanquish him vtterly is
deuout, hearty, zealous & Godly prayer.
Duer & besides S. Paul his instruction,
and most needfull exhortation, in this

rase his & our Lord, Maister, and Saviour Christ Iesus, hath commended vnto vs this kind of weapon, when he taught to pray w̄ this petition, And lead vs not into temptation but deliuer vs from euill. Let vs then apply this Armor, this kind of propulsatiue weapon, and feruentlie, and heartily vse it: And firmely beleue that which Dauid the Prophet for our good incouragement hath written in Ps.145.19. God is nere to those which cal vpon him, & will fulfill the desire of them that feare him, and deliuer thē Whensoeuer therefore we are tempted, allured, and drawne on by Sathan through couetousnesse to riches, through ambition to honour, through enuy to murther, through cōcupisence to adultery, through intemperance to gluttony; or to be short through any other sinne to iniquity. Let vs straight waies by prayer craue for power and strength from aboue, to ouercome these temptations, and especially the most dangerous suggestion of Despayre.

This kind of Armour is alwaies ready at hand, so that Satan can no sooner attempt any thing against vs, but this wea-

pon is as ſone ready (if we heartily and zealouſly lay hold thereon) to repell and vanquiſh al his practiſes againſt vs: And therefore, Pray, pray, pray.

## CHAP. 2.

The ſecond Chapter concerning remedies and helps againſt ignorance, the ſecond cauſe of *Deſperation*, entreated of before in Chap. 4.

COncerning the ſecond cauſe of Deſperation, to wit, ignorance; Our Lord Ieſus Chriſt who was nothing ignorant of the manifold miſchiefes, and of the manifeſt dangers that the Diuell leadeth ſilly men into, as it were blindfolded through blinde ignorance: and hee knowing that Ignorance is rather the mother of deſperation (as heretofore in the 4. Chap. of the cauſes of Deſperation hath beene ſufficiently prooued) then of Deuotion, as the Papiſts haue in this point ignorantly taught & maintaind: hath in his owne perſon, & with his owne mouth exhorted and admoniſhed all men, to Search the Scriptures, Io. 5. 29

which

which is a lesson in this case most necessary for all men, to learne thereby to deliuer themselues out of the dangerous gulfe of Ignorance, and so consequently out of many other sinnes, and finally out of desperation; whereinto thousands through Ignorance haue bene implunged and drowned for euer.

Remedies against Ignorance.

Let vs therefore for the remedie and auoiding of finall Desperation, whereunto so many runne headlong through Ignorance, little knowing, and lesse regarding what they doe, vntill it be too late; receiue the word of God, which (as S. Iames saith) is able to saue our soules: with al readines like vnto the Noblemē of Berea, & search the Scriptures daily. Act. 17. 11

Let vs seeke after the knowledg of God in time. And as the Prophet Esay said, Esa. 55. 6. Seeke the Lord whiles he may be found & cal vpon him whils he is neere. And let vs be assured of this ỹ al māner of Ignorance is perillous; but wilful Ignorance of all other is most perilous (For it is (as a learned Writer hath affirmed) a plain Prognostication, & a demonstratiue argument of eternall death. It is a most horrible and fearefull thinge for a man to

The danger of wilfull Ignorance.

A. D. in the plaine mans path to heauen.

to refuse instructions, dispise counsaile, harden their Hearts, stoppe their eares, and close vp their eyes against God: this is the very vp shot of euerlasting ruine.

What the Ignorant must doe.

Let the ignorant therefore that stand in this dangerous estate repayre with al diligence and attentiuenesse vnto the learned Ministers & dispencers of Gods most sacred word, and at their mouths enquire the knowledge of Gods lawes. This doth God himselfe commaund vs by the Prophet Malachie, And when we feele our consciences wounded, let vs after the example of the Godly, faithfull and deuout people, who after the hearing of Gods word preached, came vnto Peter and the rest of the Apostles, saying, Men & brethren, what shall we do? Euen thus I say, let vs come vnto Gods Ministers, and confesse & acknowledge our great blindnes and ignorance, and say vnto them. Help vs, instruct vs, teach vs, set vs in the way, & guid vs in the paths of the knowledge of God and of our saluation: for surely they are the Phisitions and Surgions of our soules, so that if we repayre vnto them, they shall giue vs to drinke of the holesome waters of knowledge

Malac 4.

Act. 2.

Counsell for the ignorant very necessary.

What the true Ministers of gods word are.

ledge, to quench our thirst of Ignorance: they are the dispencers of the manifolde graces of God, & the Lords Stewards to giue each one of vs our portions in due time.

We haue not Christ alwaies amongst vs (as appertayning to his bodely presence) but as himselfe saith, we haue the Poore alwaies amongst vs: euen so also we haue not Christ himselfe (that body I meane which sitteth at the right hand of God the father) alwaies with vs: but yet our Lord Christ, ascending vp on high, gaue vnto men among other giftes, this gift also (if we could rightly cõsider of it) of no smal value, euẽ Pastors & Doctors that is, the Ministers of the Gospell of Christ, that might instruct, informe, and teach vs in the way of life, that might declare vnto vs the secret counsailes & hiden misteries of God, thet might arme vs with the Sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, to encounter & resist our deadly enemy the Diuel therwith. Let vs ioyfully receiue them; for who so receiueth them as they ought to be, receiueth also with thẽ, him that sent them, whose Messengers they are, Let

How the true ministers of Gods word are to be accounted of

vs heare them, for they bring vnto vs the word of life: Let vs giue credit vnto the Lords Ministers, & Glory vnto the Lord himselfe, that hath giuen in his great loue this blessing vnto vs, to haue his messengers and Ambassadours abiding among vs, to declare and make known vnto vs by them, what his own good will and pleasure is in all thinges, to the auoiding of this blind ignorance, the very mother of Desperation, and so consequently of eternall Damnation with the Author thereof, and his cursed Angels for euer.

## CHAP. 3

### Of the great seruitude & bondage of sins and of the remedies thereof.

COncerning the great seruitude and bondage of sin being the third (before noted) cause of Desperation, for the helpes and remedies thereof this haue I briefly to say, that what though we haue bin seruants vnto sinne, and haue beene pressed, and surpressed with the bondage thereof, so that we must nædes confesse,

(vnlesse

(vnlesse we should proue our selues lyars, and thrt there were no truth in vs) that we through our often doing of those thinges which we should not haue done; & on the other side, through our leauing off those things vndon which we should haue done, haue most iustly deserued Gods threatned curses and plagues to light on our bodies, our soules, our children, our stockes, our croppes, & euery thing else we goe about, & put our hands vnto. What though our sinnes fight against our soules, and gnaw our consciences, and be ready euen out of hand to lead vs into the most dangerous state of Desperation? What though wee haue contended & fallen out with our brethrē as did Paul and Barnabas, who were so hot in contententiō one against another, that they forsooke one an others company in high displeasure and heat of their stomacks, the one taking with him Luke the other Iohn? What though wee haue yeelded vnto, practised, and followed Oppression, Extortion, polling, pilling and wresting that wee can by hooke or crooke from our brethren? So did Zacheus, yet notwithstanding after his re-

Examples tending to the strengthning of our faith. hope and patience against desperation.

Luke 19 2

pentance, his forsaking & ceasing from bad getting, his restitution, and almes giuing, receaued that most chearefull and comfortable saying of Christ, This
Luk. 19 9 day is saluation entred into thine house, What though we haue bin théeues, robbers & stealers of our neighbours goods: so was the théefe that was crucified with Christ; and yet vpon eis humble, contrite, and sorrowfull confession of his sinnes, he heard this most sweete word from Christ, This day shalt thou be with mee in Paradise. What though we haue murthered and shed the blood, or caused the bloud to be shed of some of our brethren: so did Dauid to Vrias, and yet vpon his zealous, inward & true vnfained sorrowfulnes & repentance, hee was not taken away in his sinne, but found pardon. And so did the Iewes which put to death the Lord of life.

King Manasses was an Idolater, he defiled the Temple of God, hee with stood and did beat downe the truth, hee set vp
2. Kin. 21 Idolatry, he was a coniurer & a Southsayer, he shed aboundance of Innocent bood, so that the streets flowed therewith, he committed more abhominati-

ons

ons thē the Cananites or Amorites whō for their filthines the Lord cut off out of the land of the liuing, he sacrificed his sonnes and daughters to Diuells: and yet vpon his true returning to the Lord from the bottom of his heart, he found fauour and mercy.

If our sinnes then, or the sins of any one of vs, were as grieuous as euer were the sins of Manasses, yet vpon our true and vnfained returne to the Lord shall we despayre of his mercy? shall we or may we, or dare we thinke that the mercy and power of the Lord is shortened? or that God is not the same God he was? Is he not as ready to pardon & forgiue sinnes, the sinnes of a man repenting, returning, & faithfully calling vpon him, as euer he was the sinnes of Manasses? 2.Chr.33.

All these examples, and many more, are written for our learning, comfort & strengthning of our faith, hope, and patience, that we should in no wise despayre vpon our true repentance, neither for the multitude nor grieuousnesse of our sinnes.

And likewise also it is written for the

bruſing, & as it were euen for the breaking of the backe of all damnable Deſperation, and to hold the hearts, and to reſtore the fainting and dull ſpirites of all ſuch as the ſeruitude and bondage of ſinne (this our third cauſe of Deſperation) doth vexe and preſſe downe: It is (I ſay) written, that the Sonne of man is come to ſaue mens liues. And he himſelfe hath ſaid, I am come to call not the iuſt but ſinners, And againe, Ieſus Chriſt is come to giue his life a redemptiō for many. Alſo God the father hath not ſent his Son to iudge the World, but to the end the world may be ſaued by him.

Luk. 9.56

Math. 10.
Math. 20
Ioh. 3.

Whertore Chriſt came into this world

Now what is it to ſaue & not to iudge: but to deliuer from death and damnation; wherein we lay in the middeſt of the bondage of ſinne; for ſinne is the death and damnation of the ſoule: Now hee cannot ſaue vs except ſinne bee firſt taken from vs; And therefore, and for this cauſe came Ieſus Chriſt the Sonne of God, and hee hath declared himſelfe to the world to the end that he ſhould take away ſinnes, and ſhould deſtroy the workes of the Diuell. If it bee ſo that Ieſus Chriſt be come into the world to take

Ioh. 8.

take away sins; and if the same were his intent and his message, ỹ purpose of Iesus Christ shall not fayle at all, and his message remaineth stedfast and true; he then without all doubt, hath taken away this which ỹ Diuell would perswade vs to be a cause of Desperation, this great seruitude and bondage of sinne, from all those that trust in him, and do verily beleeue, and perswade themselues in the bottome of their consciences that it is most true: but yet how comes this to passe: to wit, by Iesus Christ onely by his owne free grace and mercy; by the benefitts and merites of himselfe, who is our onely Sauiour, without any other meane or merit; for he is the only Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world. Ioh. 1. 29

As also S. Peter said to ỹ Iewes, There is none other saluation, but onely in Iesus Christ; for among men there is gīē none other name vnder heauē wherby we must be saued. Act. 4 12.

And so Christ himselfe said after he was risen from ỹ dead. It must needs haue bin, that Christ must haue suffered death & that he must haue risen the third day frō the dead, & that amēdmēt of life, & forgiuenes of sins must Luk. 24. 44

be

be preached in his name to all people & to all nations. O how sweete and comfortable are these words and sayings of God which is the onely eternall truth indeed? O how worthy are they to bee laid up in the depth of our hearts, and to haue our whole confidence reposed freely vpon them! And to the Colloſſians it is ſaid, God hath quickened vs which were dead in ſins with Ieſus Chriſt, forgiuing vs all our treſpaſſes, & hath put out the hand-writing that was againſt vs, he euen took it out of the way, & faſtened it on the Croſſe. What meaneth he by this, but onely that Ieſus Chriſt hath taken away the obligation of our debts to wit, that we did owe for our ſinnes, and hath taken it & tied it with himſelfe vpon the Croſſe; & hath indeed paid it full bitterly: who alſo is for vs, & will ſurely take away this great ſeruitude & bondage of ſin (which the Diuel would vſe as an inſtrument of Deſperation againſt vs) in caſe we will beleeue his word, & that we can ſetle our minds & quiet our hearts, to account & eſteeme his bitter paſſion and merits to bee ſo great and of ſuch value, that they are able, effectuall, and

Colloſ. 2.

of

of sufficient strength, to obtaine these
aforesaid things for vs. And Christes
prayer to his heavenly Father is heard,
and remaineth heard continually when Ioh.17.20
he praied, saying, I pray not for these alõe
(meaning his three present Disciples)
but for them also which shall believe in
me through their word: Wherefore the
same prayer includeth every one of vs, so
farre forth as wee believe, and place the
same in our hearts, and whollye repose our
selves thereon.

And S. Peter saith, Iesus Christ hath cõ-
manded vs to preach vnto the people, & Act.10.42
to testifie that it is he that is ordayned of 43.
God a Iudge of the quick & the dead, &
that to him all the Prophets giue witnes,
that through his name all that believe,
should receiue remission of sins.

Moreover, S. Paul saith, God hath made 2.Cor.5.
him which knew no sinne, sinne for vs, to 21.
the end that wee should be made the
righteousnes of God in him.

And here is to be noted, what righte- What man
ousnes, or Justice & goodnes that is, ner of righ
which God requireth and esteemeth; teousnes
which is no other, but that onely which God requ-
dwelleth and holdeth vppon the Justice ireth at our
hands

God.

Goodnesse, and merit of Iesus Christ, being vtterly ignorant of the Iustice or Righteousnes and goodnes which many do seeke in their owne good workes.

But yet when I stand so much vpon this point, to proove that our sinnes should be no cause of Desperation, (a thing which the diuell greatly vrgeth & obiecteth against the conscience of an ignorant man) for that our sins are taken away by the innocent Lambe Christ Iesus, that he hath sufficiently paid the ransome therof, & that we are become righteous, by ỹ righteousnes of Iesus Christ: it is not here my meaning, neither wold I haue any man so to mistake mee, and mis-vnderstand me, that I thinke, or would haue any other men to thinke hereby, that there is no more sinne in vs or that sinne dwelleth not in these our mortall bodies: for I confesse it plainly, and it is too true, that sinne indeede dwelleth in vs; but yet to the great comfort of an afflicted conscience against desperation I affirme it (hauing the holy scriptures for my teachers herein) that although the roote of sin, the naughty disposition, and inclination to sinne re-

Sin dwelleth euen in the beleeuers, & in the most righteous men in the world: but yet raigneth not in the

mayneth

maineth alwaies strong in a Christian, and neuer can be wholy vanquished before we put off by death, this sinfull flesh of ours; although (I say) it doe dwell in vs, yet it doth not raign in any Christiã beleeuer; yet it is not able to damne a true faithfull beleeuer: it cannot (I say) damne vs for as much as we are in Iesus Christ, and that we doe fight and striue against the remanent of sinne, albeit we stagger and wauer sometimes, and doe feele and perceiue our selues to be assayled somtimes by the strong temptations of the diuell, and the flesh. This is it that S. Paul writeth of when he saith, There is now no damnation to them that are in Christ Iesus, which walke not after the flesh but after the spirit. Rom. 8. 1

The remanent and roote of sin dwelleth alwaies in vs, but we like vnto licentious worldlings, giue it not the bridle, and suffer it not to range too farre, and to take too deepe a roote, but wee breake it, tame it, and make it subiect vnto vs by walking after the spirit. &c. and then nothing more sure then that there shal be no condemnation at al vnto vs thereby, neither any cause of desperation

ration therby, for that we are iustified by our faith and deliuered from sinne; to wit, these sinnes which might condemne vs, the roote, originall, and mother of sinne yet notwithstanding still abyding, remayning and dwelling in vs; against which we warre and striue, as long as we continue in this life; but the victory remaineth to our Chieftaine and head-Captaine Iesus Christ, by the law of his spirit which maketh vs to liue in him, and hath set vs free from the right of sin and death (in such sort that wee may no more feare sinne, nor death) by Iesus Christ, who hath ouercome all for our wealth, and hath reconciled vs eternally to his Father; who as our deare Father, from hence-forth will shew fauour vnto vs, for the loue of Iesus Christ his deare Sonne, and so will take from vs all our sinnes as though we had neuer committed them. Euen so doth he promise, saying, God is one God willing to shew vs grace & mercy, he wil turn to vs & wil be fauourable, & he wil take away our iniquities, & cast our sinns into the depth of the sea. And again it is said of Gods wonderfull mercies, The Lord is full of com-

Mich. 7. 18 19.

passion

passiõ & mercy, long suffering & of great goodnes. He wil not alwaies be chiding, neither keepeth he his anger for euer He hath not delt with vs after our sins, nor rewarded vs according to our iniquities. For look how high the heauen is in comparison of the earth, so great is his mercy also towards them that feare him: Looke how wide also the east is from the west, so far hath he set our sins frõ vs. Yea, like as a father pitieth his own children; euen so is the Lord merciful vnto them that feare him: for he knoweth wherof we be made; he remembreth that we are but dust. &c. Psal. 103. 8. 9. 10. &c

Of the great mercies of God towards sinners, read more in Psal. 145. 8. 9. and 147. 8, 10. & in Ioel. 2. 13. Math. 18. 11. 2. Cor. 1. 3. Eph. 2. 4. 1. Tim. 1. 13. vnto the 18. verse. Places of holy Scriptures, setting forth Gods great mercies.

Surely these places are words of most rare and singuler comfort, and they be certaine, firme, sure, and vnchangeable spoken and pronounced by the eternall verity it selfe, & therefore not to be mistrusted or dispaired of. But yet let vs take heed, least that verse be verified in vs, Stulti dum vitant vitia in contraria currunt.

Let vs not abuse Gods mercies, making a cloake thereof to couer our sinnes: Let vs not presume too far, and say as in Ecclesiastic. 5. 6. The mercy of God is great, he wil forgiue my manifold sins: for mercy & wrath commeth from him &c.

## CHAP. 4

The fourth Chapter concerning the Remedies to be vsed against the fourth cause of Desperatiō, arising of the doubts suggested by the Diuel vnto many men to bring them into dispayre of their saluation, by meanes of the small number of those that shall be saued, in comparison of the great nūber of the reprobate.

A catalogue or rehearsall of many thinges whereby the Diuell craftily tempteth men to sin and desperation.

GReat indeed is the power, & manifold & meruailous are the polices, deuices, wiles, subtilties, assaults, and suggestions, wherewith and wherby that wylie Fox, that old bitten Dogge, that subtle Sathan the Diuell, dayly and hourely practiseth to entice, allure, and euen as it were to force multitudes of men heare on earth, into one sinne or other, wherunto he findeth and proueth them

them to be naturally inclined; and laſt of all vpon one occaſion or other, into Deſperation.

How the diuel tempteth by riches.

If he eſpieth a man to be rich, and to haue worldly bleſſings through the gift of God, then will he apply him earneſtly by his proſperity to lull him aſleepe in the forgetfulneſſe of God, in worldly Pleaſures, pleaſant Vanities, & tranſitory delights, comforts, and ſolaces; and by truſting in his riches to lift vp himſelfe arrogantly aboue others; to ſwell in pride, and to contemne his brethren, committing (and that with great ſawcineſſe and boldneſſe) manie fond, palpable, and groſſe errors and follies, againſt Gods word, euen as if hee ſhould ſay, Who is the Lord?

How the diuel tempteth by pouerty.

On the other ſide if a man be poore, he laboureth therby to make him contemptible before the world, to pinch and nip him with the want of many thinges neceſſary both for backe and belly, that hee ſeeth before his face many others haue in great & in aboundant meaſure; he ſolliciteth him to ſteale, to take the name of God in vaine, to ſeeke after gaine by vnhoneſt, vnlawfull, and vngodly meanes; Pro. 30. 9

to murmure, distrust, blaspheme, and despayre.

How the Diuell tempteth by friends Gen. 3. 6. Iob. 2. 9 Ester 5. 14

If a man haue friends he will vse them as his instruments, to tempt vnto some euill by their lewd and wicked counsaile, as he did procure Euah to doe vnto Adam, Iob his wife to Iob. Haman his Wife vnto Haman.

How the Diuell tempteth by enemies.

If thou hast enemies then will he prick thee forward by their proceedings and dealings against thee, vnto vniust choler, wicked anger, and diuelish reuenge.

How the Diuell tempteth by carefulnes.

If thou be carefull for thy family, wife and children, he will take hold vpon that occasiõ to stuffe thy heart with too much desire of hauing, and getting by right or by wrong, and thereby through extreame couetousnes, make thee to forgoe all godlines and piety.

How the Diuell tempteth by security and carelesnes.

On the other side if thou be careles, that's it that he can make vse of also; for as S. Bernard saith, Infert diabolus securitatẽ, vt inferat etiam perditionem. &c. In heauẽ Angels became diuels. In Paradise Adam and Euah fel into disobedience. In the schoole of Christ, Iudas became a traitor to his Lord & Maister: & al this (saith S. Bern.) through security and

and retchlesnes, to keepe themselues in that good state wherein they were once set.

Hast thou strength? thereby will hee take occasion to embolden and harden thee to doe iniury and wrong, and to set vpon thy weaker.

Hast thou health and a strong able body? by those will hee induce and entice thee to one kinde or other of lewdnes and dissolutnes.

*How the Diuell tempteth by strength by healthableneſſe of body & beauty.*

Hast thou beauty? that will he make an instrument for bawdry; an inticemẽt and an allurement to voluptuousnes & wanton delights.

Hast thou honour and dignity in the world? thereby will he blow the bellows of pride, audacity, and boldnesse, to oppresse, to crush, and tread vnder foote thine inferiours.

*How the diuel tempteth by honour and dignity.*

Hast thou viuacity, & quicknes of spirit, and sharpenes of wit and learning? these also will he striue to abuse & wrest to serue his turne to excogitate, inuent, and deuise a thousand vanities; yea, & all the rare and excellent guiftes of God, which God doth bestow on any man: this Diuell, this arch-enemy of mankind

*How the Diuell tempteth by quicknes of spirit & sharpnes of wit.*

kind will leaue no waies, nor meanes vnattempted, to procure man to abuse the same to a cleane contrary ende (if it were possible) to that for which they were bestowed.

*How the diuel tempteth by gods word*

And finally the very Word of God, giuen through Gods great and infinite goodnesse, to be our spirituall Sword, to resist and encounter the Diuell with; which as S. Iames saith, is able to saue the souls of men: which as S. Paul saith, is the power of God to saluation to 'euery one that beleeueth: which as holy Dau. saith; was a lanterne vnto his feet & a light vnto his paths. This, euen this, wil the Diuil so far forth as euer he may, with al ỹ cunning fetches, crafts, & policies that euer he can deuise, seeke to abuse, wrest, and misapply, from ths true meaning sence and signification thereof, to confirme lies, vntruths, and heresies, therby: he will draw some texts and sentences, thereof to bring men into presumption of their owne Vertues, Worthines and merits to their vtter ouerthrow. And likewise with some other places & sentences thereof, he will bestir himselfe to bring men to wauer in faith, to doubt of

*How the Diuell will abuse, wrest, and misapply gods word*

of Gods graces and mercies through Christ, & so finally to fall into vtter desperation. And thus doth he dayly abuse and wrest all those places of holy Scriptures before noted and alledged in the fourth cause of Desperation, tending to proove the small number of those that shall be saued, in comparison of the huge and great number of the reprobate.

Those places I say, doth he vrge vpon the consciences of many in the world, & by his misapplying of them, and by his misconstruing of Christs purpose, drift, and meaning therein, draweth and driueth them to feare and to tremble, to doubt and despayre, that they are none of that small number, seeing so few shall be saued.

But O thou man that art thus tried, tempted, and drawne towards temptation! for thy remedy and helpe herein Search the Scriptures, and consider vpon those places, to what end and purpose Christ deliuered this doctrine, and thou shalt anon proue and finde, that his meaning was nothing lesse then to driue men into dispayre, but rather hereby to exhort, perswade, and to giue caueats,

The true vse of those Scriptures which the Diuell seeketh to abuse, to bring men to desperation thereby.

and warning peeces vnto all men that run at randome after the world, to remember them selus, and their dangers, and tickle states; to awake & rouse them vp that are so fast lulled a sleepe in the dangerous cradle of security, and retchlesnesse, that so they might be touched, moued and stirred vp to embrace in time when time serues, a farre more diligent and watchfull care of their saluation, that by such meanes they may bee found in the number of Christs litle flock and of those few that shal be saued; whō the Apostle Paul exhorteth to make an end of their saluation with feare & trembling: by which they might be made more carefull and more diligent in that theire so waighty a busines.

Phi. 2. 12

## CHAP. 5

The fift Chapter wherein are contained the comforts, helpes & remedies against the fift cause of desperatiō, which is the heauy and great waight of crosses, afflictions, troubles and necessities, that God suffereth to fall vpon many in this life.

MOst true, most notable, and most comfortable for the distressed & afflicted children of God, is that golden sentence of the holy Ghost, penned by his chosen vessell S. Paul, Rom. 8. 28. All things work together for the best, to the that loue God. For euen the afflictions & troubles of Gods children are so sanctified vnto them by the spirit, that by the same they are made partakers of Gods holines. By the same they enioy the quiet frut of Righteousnesse. By the same they attaine vnto a greater measure of Ioy in the holy Ghost. By the same the world is crucified to them, and they to the world. By the same they are made conformable to Christs death. By the same they are kept from the condemnation of the wourld. By the same they learne experience, patience, hope &c.

Rom. 8. 22.

Heb. 12. 10

Heb. 12. 14

1 The. 1. 6

Gal. 6, 14

1, Cor, 11 32,

Rom, 5, 5,

So that these things rightly pondred weighed, and considered, their Crosses are mercies, their losses gaines, ther afflictions are their schoolings, and their aduersity their learned Vniuersity. Auoide thou Sathan, thou canst not make these afflictōs, crosses and trubles neither good nor likely causes of Desperation,

The comforts and commodities of the crosses and afflictions to Gods children.

ration, so they be taken, borne and vsed as they ought to bee, for it is written for the learning, comfort, helpe, and remedie of all Gods afflicted children, whome thou wouldest full gladly perswade, that their afflictions are signes & prognosticating tokens of Gods wrath; and so consequently if thou couldst, thou wouldst draw them therby to despaire of Gods loue & mercy. It is written I say: That the Lord correcteth him whom he loueth, euē as the father doth the child in whom he delighteth. And againe, My son, despise not the chastning of the Lord neither faint when thou art rebuked of him, for whom the Lord loueth he chasteneth; & he scourgeth euery son that he receiueth. If ye indure chastning, God offereth himselfe vnto you as vnto sons; for what son is it whō the father chasteneth not? If therfore ye be without correction, whereof al are pertakers, thē are ye bastards & not sons, & so forth vnto the 12. v. These & many other such like sayinges & sentences of the holy scriptures, are most euidēt testimonies, that afflictions, troubles, crosses, and vexations, are sure tokens of Gods grace, mercy, and fauour,

Pro. 12. 12.

He. 12. 5 6 7. 8. 9. &c.

where-

wherby God assureth vs of his merciful will and fatherly good heart towards vs and not signes of his wrath & heauy displeasure, as the diuell would perswade vs, thereby to cause vs to dispaire.

God indeed oftentimes sendeth euilles euen vpon his owne beloued children; but yet to the intent to doe them good thereby: and withall in the middest of those euils which he toucheth them with hee sendeth them some comforts to hold their hearts with. Examples hereof you may see in Adam and Euah, for whē for their disobedience God would banish them out of that most pleasant place in all the world, wherein at the first he had placed them, yet in the middest of that punishment which he had laid vppon them, his fatherly kindnesse shewed it selfe; for before he droue them out, hee made them coates to arme them against all weather, and he comforted them with a promise of ȳ blessed seed (Iesus Christ) which should restore that saluation to mankind which they had lost by yeelding to the Serpents entisings. Gen. 3. 12

Why God sendeth euils to his children, & how he sendeth comforts in the middest of euils.

This was, and this is, the most kind & louing dealing of God with man, he will

make

make vs to smart a little for our sinnes: here is his iustice; but yet so that he will not vtterly forsake vs, nor giue vs ouer for euer: here is his mercy. Auoid therfore Sathan, once I say againe auoide; cease to suggest or to ingest into any mans heart that he should think because that God doth crosse & afflict him, that therefore he doth hate, forsake, and vtterly casteth of those with whom he so dealeth: for this is most true, that as Christ Iesus hath taught vs to call vpon him by the name of a Father, saying, Our father which art in heauen &. so he loues vs as a Father, for his sake: and againe hee will be more mindfull of vs, then our owne Mothers; for why? himselfe hath so taught vs, and so promised, as appeareth in Esa. 49.

*How God loueth and dealeth with his children.*

Examine and consider but a little the proceedings and dealings of Mothers and Fathers with their children, & therby shall you see and perceiue more clearely, how God handles his children vnder their afflictions, troubles, and crosses.

It is the fashion & manner of a good kind and naturall Father, that fains would

would see good proofe of his child, first to instruct and teach him in the vertuous course and waies of wel-doing: Secondly to giue him oftentimes warning and monition, to keepe him in that good way which he hath taught him: Thirdly if words will not serue, then to ierke him now and then with the rodde: Fourthly, in case his child being now growne vp, waxe stubborne, malapart, and disobedient, if he will needes spend his thrift wantonly, prodigally and ryotously in ill company, then comes his Father & drawes him out by the eares and with a whip or cudgell, beates him till his bones cracke.

All this he doth, & yet with a fatherly loue, and a naturall kind affection, to feare him, and to tame him; and as it were with violence, to bring him to amendment not minding to forsake him, nor vtterly to cast him off for euer.

Euen such as this is the dealing of our heauenly Father, with his vntowardly, stubborne, and disobedient children: For, first he teacheth and instructeth them by the Ministers, Teachers, and Preachers of his holy word and will:

hee

he giueth them often monitions & warning to walke in his waies, and to liue in his obedience; which if they despise and will not follow, then he vseth his rods, as pouerty, sicknes, diseases, crosses in their children, in their stocke, in their crop, and such like: and when this will not serue, nor doe any good, but still on they ware obstinate and stubborne, and care not neither for words nor warning; for stripes nor gentle correction; then God sendeth vpon them more heauy & grieuous punishments, as plagues, pestilẽces, dearth, casualties of fire, wars losse of victory, fire and sword, captiuity, and other such like great & almost intollerable mischiefs: and all these to worke in them acknowledging of God, hũbling thẽselues vnder the mighty hand of God sorrowfulnes of hart for their negligence in seruing of God, and true vnfained repentance, and turning againe vnto God, who then is as ready to receiue them as euer he was before, and with mercy and louing kind benefites to blesse them: Examples hereof holy scriptures affordeth not a few, but especially in ỹ gouernment of Gods chosen people the Israelites, wher-

Gods rods of what sort they are.

What God seeketh to worke by dealing hardly with his children.

wherein it doth plainly appeare, that although God did oftentimes punish the disobedience & falling away of those his people; yet it euer proued nothing els, but the displeasure of a kinde and louing father, which sought not their vtter ouerthrow, but rather their reformation and amendment. Let vs therefore in the like cases, not despayre of Gods mercy, but amend our former wicked course of life & yeeld our selues patiently vnto our heauenly father, & reioyce in him, in the middest of our troubles & afflictions, for as much as there is nothing more sure thē that if we returne to him, but he wil likewise turn again vnto vs with a gracious & fatherly mind, heart, & good will.

In this behalfe also is God compared and likened vnto a kind louing mother; for like as a natural mother is very carefull, watchfull & diligent about her child, she trimmeth it, she dresseth it, feedeth it, nourisheth it, praieth to God heartily for it and doth all the good she can for it with a most louing, tender, & motherly affection; & yet now and then she is so disquieted in hir mind, so moued and prouoked by her childs peltishnes, frowardnes

Gods affection to his Children like vnto a kind louing mothers affection.

and

and vnrulines, that she is euen against her owne nature, forced to bee angrye with it to chide it, and sometimes to beat it: Euen so like vnto this motherly dealing, is the property and naturall affection of God towards Mankind, who as he would not the death of a sinner, so neither delighteth he in any manner of griefe, sorrow trouble or misfortune of man, were he not sometimes stirred vp, moued, and prouoked, through our frowardnes, vnthankfulnes & vnkindnes, to chasten & correct vs, and like as a mother though she bee angry and offended with her child for a time, yet her displeasure soone passeth away she giueth it not ouer, she forsaketh it not, she forgetteth it not for euer. Euen after the like fashion doth God our heauenly father deale with man: nay more mindful, more kind and more pitifull is God towards vs. This is most true, the mouth of God himselfe hath spoken it; for these are his words. Can a woman forget her owne Esa. 49. 15 child & not haue compassiō on the son of her wombe? though she should forget, yet will not I forget thee. And finally (to drawe to an end of this cōparison) euen

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as a Mother when her child is impish, preuish, and wayward, menaceth and threateneth it to throw it away to a Begger, & scarreth it with some bugs, throffs Hobgoblins, or such like, and all to make it quiet, and to cling the more vnto her: so likewise our good Father, when he seeth that we forget him make smaller reckoning of him then becomes vs, & wars vnthankfull & vntowardly to al goodnes declining and hasting on apace to follow all sin and iniquity; then he sometimes sheweth vs the terrible faces of fearefull troubles and dangers, and he will bring vs into great perrils: yea, and for our vnthankfulnes, and other such like offences, he will now & then take away by one meanes or other, our health, our wealth, our peace, our liberty, our safety, &c.

And all this doth hee to cause vs to turne backe againe vnto him, to cleaue and cling the faster vnto him, to pray & call vpon him the more faithfully, heartely and zealously for his help & deliuerance, to esteem better of his gifts, when we enioy them, and to be more thankefull for them when we haue them.

So that the very causes of all troubles, crosses, and calamities are not to worke in vs murmuring & grudging, & despayre, but if we wil weigh them & cõsider them throughly, to make good vse of them, they may turne to our great profit and benefit, and not to our hurt: For like as a naturall Father & mother doe, so doth God loue vs when he smiteth vs; he fauoureth vs, whẽ he seemeth to be most against vs; when hee seemeth to be most angry, hee aimeth most at our good, for as S. August. saith, Melius nouit medicus quid expediat quam ægrotus, The sicke man the patient, neuer knoweth so well what is good for him as doth ỹ Phisition. And therfore the Physitions & Surgions whẽ they see no other remedy for ỹ recouery, curing, & amending of their sick, corrupted, & infected patients, vse to minister vnto them tart, bitter, harsh, and vnpleasant things, & to sears, burne, and cut away corrupted, rotten, & dead flesh with sawes, yron, and other such like instruments, and all to saue & cherish the sound and whole parts, Ne pars sincera trahatur, least that which is whole, should by the other be corrupted,

God dealeth with his children as Phisitions and Surgions doe with their Patients.

infected

infected and poysoned: euen so doth God sometimes (when he sees tis best for vs) plague our bodies sharply and grieuously, that our soule may be preserued and saued. The Phisition in compounding of his best Triacle, vseth Serpents, Adders and other poysoned thinges, that wth the same he may driue out one poyson wth an other: Euen so God (as by Histories plentifully in Gods Booke it appeares) vseth the ministery, helpe, and seruice of Diuels, and of most diuelish & wicked men, by them to afflict and chastice vs, and yet to doe vs good withall; & afterwards burneth the roddes when he hath corrected and beaten his children with them a while. It is not giuē to euery mā (I must needes confesse) to vnderstand this, and to make this good vse of afflictions, crosses, and troubles laid vpon them for their sins sake; for then should Pharaoh and many of his wicked courtiers like himselfe; then should Cain, Saul Iudas Iscariot, & many other vile, leaud, and desperate persons beside, in their manifold crosses, troubles, and aduersities, haue turned vnto the Lord and beene saued.

How God vseth sometimes the seruice of Diuells & wicked men.

The wicked are not bettered by their troubles & afflictions.

But we must learne and know, that aduersities, troubles, & afflictions, of themselues and of their owne proper nature, cannot worke and bring such profits, & so much good vnto men: But it is the spirit of God, which resting in Gods faithfull children, purgeth, reformeth, comforteth, and strengtheneth them, & by these outward meanes worketh all these good thinges in vs: And so whatsoeuer goodnes hath bene spoken of heretofore to befall men by meanes of aduersities, crosses, and troubles, is to be vnderstood onely of the faithfull and godly, which are taught and led by the spirit of God, to consider rightly of them, & to make such vse of them, that according as in the beginning of this Chapter it is truely said, to thē that loue God all thinges worke togither for the best.

Whence it commeth that afflictions and crosses profit Gods children.

Rom. 8. 28

Whereas on the other side, in the vnfaithfull, vnrepentant, and wicked ones, they worke after another fashion, & are of cleane contrary operation, whiles that they ascribe their aduersities and troubles, either to blind Fortune and Chance; as though Fortune had a certaine power to worke, without the working

The conceites and opinions of the wicked in chiefe aduersities and troubles.

working and prouidence of God; or els, vnto them that are not of their own sect, faith, and religion, as did wicked Ahab to godly Elias, or to ỹ Magistrates, or to the Ministers of Gods word, or to Faith and religion it selfe, or to the Planets, Starres, & influences of the Elements; yea, and some will blame God himselfe, as though they themselues were so innocent and blameless, that God deales not well with them to lay vpon them such crosses & punishments: and so very busie they make themselues, to shift off all blame euer to others faults. 4. Kin. 18

And although their sinnes be multiplied to exceeding multitudes of offences, yet they will not see nor confesse any such thinges in themselues, nor any thing consider, nor regard the punishments of God laied vpon them, and cleauing vnto them for the same. But through their hardnesse of heart, and want of faith (which is the mother of all blasphemy, and abhomination) they can not spy whose hand it is that is against them, nor wherefore; or els beeing euen as it were violently forced to know it,

that it is, the working of ỹ Lord against them, and his vengeance in heauy displeasure vpon them; yet they will not be mooued thereby, nor any thing at all stirred vp to amend their liues, but like vnto King Pharaoh the more God correcteth them, the more obstinate they swarue, decline, and flie away, from him being like vnto graceless children, with whom neither words, threatninges, nor beating, can preuaile. Like vnto them ỹ will neither daunce with the piper, nor lament with the mourner: and so farre off are they from being recouered, won, and reformed by meanes of any crosses, afflictions, and troubles lighting on thē; and following them euer as the shadow doth the body; that they will sooner burst out into al maner of impatientnes bitternes, and spightfull poysonful rayling and blaspheming words against the righteousnes of God, saying, That their punishment is greater then their sinnes, and heauier then they can brooke or beare: and that they are wronged, and are not indifferently dealt with, & so at the length after heaping one sinne in the necke of an other, the Diuel brings them

Mat. 11. 17
Luk. 7. 31. 32.

on

on, and by little and little winds them into that he gapes for, namely into a reprobate mind, and deadly Deſperation, in ſo much that at the laſt they fall too, and yeelde to murthering, hanging, drowning, o by other ſuch meanes moſt miſerably, to diſpatch themſelues with their own hands, like vnto Saul, Achitophel & Iudas, ſo giuing themſelues ouer to the Diuell; and as they liued for a while moſt wretchedly, ſo they depart out of the world as diueliſhly, forgeting vtterly, and al-together inconſiderate, retchleſſe, & carleſſe what ſhall become of them afterwards for euer. By whoſe liues, and manner of deaths the children of God may yet reap two commodities: firſt, they ſhal be eaſed of the great troubles, diſturbance, and diſcommodities, & of the leaud and euill examples which they gaue to others whiles they liued. And ſecondly, they which remaine a liue after them, may learn and take warning by their ſhamfull falls, and by their terrible examples, & deſperate deaths, lay hould on repentance and amendment of their liues before it be too late.

The ends that the diuell brings the wicked vnto by their afflications, troubles, and croſſes.

Two commodities to be reaped by the liues and manner of the deaths of the wicked.

CHAP.

## CHAP. 6.

The Sixt Chapter concerning the remedies against *Desperation*, arising and growing by long custome of sin, & by delaying & putting off the forsaking of sinne from day to day.

The great danger of custome of sinne, & of delaying of amendment of life.

IT is written, that the continuall and long custome of sinne, and the delaying and putting off from time to time of the amendment of life, is one of the greatest and most dangerous deceites & cunning stratagems and pollicies which the enemy of mankind doth vse towards the children of Adam: for hee is not ignorant how that like as links in a chaine one catcheth hold and hangeth by another, and one draweth another: Euen so by continuance, long custome, and secure sleeping in sinne, one sinne draweth on another, and so euery day sinne is added to sinne, so that by toleration and procrastination, sin so mightily increaseth, and by this meanes waxeth so headstrong, that in the end, the saying of the Poet proueth very true; to wit,

Qui

Qui non est hodie, cras minus aptus erit
He that is not ready to day (to forgoe & forsake sinne) to morrow-day shall he be more vnfit. The Diuell knoweth wel enough, how that like as old festred and long growne sores and diseases of the body are farre more dangerous, more troublesome, and harder to be healed, & require a longer time by much to be cured, then if they had beene looked to at the first: Euen so the diseases of the soule as swearing, theeuing, whoring, drunkennesse, & such like, being once long accustomed, setled, and hauing gotten an habit, are either neuer, or seldome, and that with greater difficulty afterwardes rooted out, then at the first beginning they might haue bene.

A comparison shewing the danger of long custome and wallowing in sinne.

And so by these diseases of the soule, the habit thereof hauing once taken root in man, and the Diuell by them hauing gotten the surer hold and possession, he endeauoureth and most diligently by all waies and meanes applieth to keep men still on in vre, and practise with old and long accustomed sinnes, vntill at the length in extreamity of sicknes towards the houer of death (if not before) he may

by

by such causes and occasions plant and worke in the heart of man deep despaire to his vtter confusion for euer.

To resist therefore, to remedy and helpe this canker-like creeping & infectious euill, let vs to day while it is yet to day, study to turn againe vnto God, cast out the Diuell, and with him this great cause and occasion of desperation, euen long custome of sinne, and delay of amendment of our liues, the thing that so hangeth on, and pressеth vs downe, & let vs in time while we haue time take a better course, loking vp vnto Iesus Christ, and set him before the eyes of our fayth, as ỹ onely marke to shoote at. And for as much as we can not turne again to the Lord, & forsake our former wallowing in our former long accustomed sins, except the Lord our God reach vs his helping hand to turne vs vnto him; and that repentance is not in our own power to take it vp & lay it downe at our owne pleasure, and that of our selues wee can not put it into our hearts when we list, except it first come from aboue; for that it is an excellent and a rare gift of God: Let vs earnestly and heartily with our humble

Whence repentance & amendment of life are to be had, & how they are to be come by ?

humble & feruent praiers beg the same at Gods hands: Let vs practise much & often hearing, reading, & meditating the word of God and with care vse all ordinary meanes for the better, and speedy attaining of it, for it is not so easie a matter to come by, as the world thinketh it: It is not an howers worke when we lie on our death-beds that will serue the turne: It is not, Cry God mercy a little for fashion sake, that will doe it: It is not a coursing or mumbling vp of a few praiers at a mans last farewel, ỹ will auaile: And yet if we were sure that that would serue, yet we are very vn-sure, whether we shall haue time, leasure, and remembrance at our last gaspe, to do that yea or no: to trust to doe it at our last houre, is but a broken staffe to be trusted vnto, And yet it is not so vncertaine, but on the other side it is as certaine, that then we shall haue many byalles, many rubs and stoppes, many impediments to lie in our waies, and to hinder our course in going forewards at that time with last gasping repentance, which many fond and foolish men relye so much vppon, and trust so much vnto, passing away their

Many are & may be deceaued in the māner & time of their repentance.

Note this ỹ ou that deferre repentance vntill your last end.

their dayes, & carelesly neglecting good opportunity when time serueth, like vnto those fiue foolish Virgins that made no preparation aforehand to be in a readines to enter in with the Bridegroom, till it was too late: this is I say, a very broken staffe to trust vnto, & a thing very doubtfull, and vncertaine to depend vpon, or to make any reconing of, for a man to repent and cry God mercy, and make himselfe fit and ready for God at his last houre, because that very many in all ages and in all places haue been and are taken away oftentimes with a suddaine death, & haue neither that houres nor halfe houres leasure that they before spake of, and trusted so much vnto.

examples shewing that it is dangerous trusting to the last hower.

When the World was eating & drinking, planting and building: when they were most secure and careless, then suddenly came the flood, and ouerwhelmed them al. Though it were a faire morning at Lots going out of Sodome, yet by and by when they least thought of any such matter, they were all suddainly destroyed. When Nabuchadnezzar was most brag and thought himselfe most safe and sure, suddenly (neuer dreaming nor once

Lu. 17. 27.

Gen. 19. 23.

Dan. 4. 12.

suspe-

suspecting any such things) was he pulled on his knées. The Rich man thought himselfe neuer more like to haue liued, then when he so busily made such great prouision, and laid vp store for many yeares: yet was his soule so dainly taken from him the very same night. And what knowest thou O man! that trustest so much, and puttest off till the last day & houre, whether that day and houre may not come as suddainely on thee, and as vnlooked for, as it did on any of these?

Luk. 12. 20 Acts 5 are two notable examples of suddaine and vnprouided death in Ananias and his wife.

Augustine and Ambrose did write one of them to the other, what his opinion was, concerning the state of an old Adulterer which in their time, as hee was going in the night time to his Whore, passing ouer a Bridge in his way, fell into the Riuer; and so being drowned, was taken away suddainely in the very purpose of his wickednesse, hauing neither houre, halfe houre, nor minute, to cry God mercy, to repent, and to pray in.

Ioannes Riuius, a learned writer, & of good credit, affirmed that in his time, & in a village of his country, two old men lying with their Whores whom they had

Lib. 1. de stultitia mortalium in procrastinanda.

Correctio nevitæ.

had aforetime haunted, in one and the selfe same night dyed, sodainly taken as it were with the manner: having likewise neither houre nor halfe houre to prepare themselues in: for the one was sodainely stabbed to death, the other was taken with a sodaine Apoplexie, whereof he presently gaue vp the Ghost.

And what knoweth any of vs all, or what greater priuiledge hath any of vs all but that we may be sodainely preuented & caried away in the middest of our sins as these were? And whether we haue not the like examples of such hastye deaths heere in England, whereby many of vs haue bin disappointed of these two or three houres at their last end, to make vs ready in, I report mee to the deaths of Earle Godwin, & Grimwood of Hitcham? wherof the Earle after he had trayterously slaine the brother of King Ed. the third, being charged afterwards by the King therwith at Windsor (where he happened to sit at table with the King) he falsly denied the fact, and for his better excuse, he falsly forswore it; and besides all this, hee moreouer tooke a piece of bread and put it into his mouth, wished

Earle Godwin his sodaine and fearefull death.

that

that hee might be choaked therewith, if hée were guilty of his blood, and it followed indeed according to his desire: for hee being choaked therewith, yéelded vp his Ghost, and fell down dead in the presence and sight of all at the Table, & from thence was had to Winchester to be buried. And likewise the said Grimwood of Hitcham in the County of Suffolke, knowne to be a wilfull forswome man, in the harueſt time next after his periury, feeling of no pain, complayning of no disease, being strong and able to labour, as he was stacking vp corn, sodainly his bowels fel out of his body, whereof immediatly he died most miserably.

Grimwood, his sodain and fearfull death.

But what need I to stand bestowing time, paper, and inke, troubling both my selfe & future Readers, in setting downe the manner of the sodain deaths of many men, seeing that both holy and prophane writers, & dayly experience it selfe, may fully fraught, store, and furnish vs with infinite examples of this sort: And what charter, priuiledge, or certain hold of life hath any of vs all, more then these heere before recited, or thousands of others in the like case haue had:

O let vs not presume therefore to run on headlong in the long and hardened custome of our sinnes! not to delay and put off the reforming of our wicked liues vntil the last houre: And although we be not stricken with suddain death, but haue both certaine dayes and houres before our death, yet (as I before said) full many are the stops, lets, and impediments which both may, and also dayly doe fall out to hinder and put by this late repentance; that so many will needs trust vnto, and make all their reckoning of, putting of from day to day, and from yeare to yeare, till this last time approach and fall on them indeed: For so long as the extreamities of sickness do nip and pinch our mortall bodies, the dolours, pangs, & pains racking & tormenting our flesh, will keepe our mindes so occupied, som' time calling on the Phisition for helpe, sometime turning, tossing, and seeking for ease in euery corner of the bed; yea, & from bed to bed, while strength doth serue, sometimes taking this receipt, and sometimes that, as the Phisitions shall minister: sometimes turmoyled and occupied both in minde and body by the

A catalogue of lets & impediments which oftentimes fall out when wee come to the last houre, that hinder and put by that late repentance, which so many trust vnto.

working

working and purging of the Apothecaries drugs receiued, sometimes disquiet and brawling with those that are attending about vs, crying out on them, as though their vsing and handling of vs weare the occasion of our greater pangs and paines: with these and such like circumstances, are both bodies and minds exercised and vexed, so long as the vigour and strength of flesh and blood are able to indure and hold out, and so busied here-with continually, that wee seldome haue any rest or leasure to frame our selues to any quiet calling on God; to any repentance, or vnfaigned and zelous, crying for mercy: for if we sometimes endeauour our selues to begin to go about it, yet behold one thing or other soone striketh all out of minde, & disturbs vs so, that neuer a whit the better: but if after the powers & sences of our bodies be once worn and weakned, and the feeling of the extreame dolours and panges of the sicknes be mittigated, whereby the body after a time of wrestling and wearying of it selfe, is now some-what quieted, and so the mind more setled, we then begin againe to take better hold,

yet still on either the care of children & wife for want of sufficient prouision for them, or griefe to depart from them, or the remembrance of lands, goods, houses & possessions, & other worldly treasures: the loue, liking & delights whereof haue possessed our hearts all our life time before, will now so afresh enter & trouble our heads & minds, that yet time serues not for to continue any such godly and christian exercises as wee in health-time when wee should haue done it, made no accompt of, and deferred vntill the last houre. Sometimes are we troubled and diseased with melancholly and frenzies, choller shooting vp into our braines, & with such crampes & conuulsions caused by much euacuation, & such abundance of choller in our veines, that hereof, follow̃es the naturall effects, rauings, blasphemings, vnsensible talking, wrything of the lips, strange and vn-accustomed wresting and turning of the neck, buckling of the ioynts and whole body; yea & often-times such extraordinary strength that three or foure men cannot hold vs nor rule vs without bonds. With these and such like strange effects, are many men

The effects of choller in time of extreame sickues.

men depriued not onely of the right vse of the parts of their bodies, but also of their reason and right wits, & last of all of life it selfe. Are not heere then lets enow from the performance of that amendment of life, and crying God mercy, which we put off in our life time?

But case that we be neither cut off with sodaine death, nor annoyed at our last end with any of these aforesaid lets and impediments of strange diseases and extraordinary effects thereof, nor with any other such like noysome & troublesome circumstances or sicknesses, but that we haue time, leasure, and quietnesse to doe all such things as any of vs all trusted vnto at our last farewel with the world: yet will that deadly enemy, that mortall aduersary of ours Sathan the Diuell, at ꝑ time aboue all other, apply himselfe; & let vs looke for no other, but what vile sinne we haue committed and delighted in all our life time, that wil he lay to our charge, and clogge our consciences with, & to bring vs into desperation with and by them, he will put vs in mind, & terrifie vs with Gods seuere threatnings against sinne. He will obiect against vs

The diuell will bee most busie to hinder repentance at our last houre.

Math. 19. that saying of our Lord Christ, that if we would haue entred into life, we should haue kept his Commandements. He wil tel vs that not he ỹ saith Lord Lord, but he that doth the wil of the father of heauen, shall enter into the Kingdome of God. He will put vs in mind that, Not the hearers of the Law, but the doers shal be iustified. He wil threaten vs that because we haue liued according to the flesh, we shall die. He wil crack vs that the vnrighteous shall not inherite the kingdom of God: & that neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers nor Wãtons, nor Buggerers nor theeues, nor the Couetous nor Drũkards nor Railers, nor Extortioners, shal inherit the kingdome of God.

Math. 7.
Rom. 2.
Rom. 8.
1. Cor. 6. 9. 10.

And that such as haue liued according to the works of the flesh, which are repeated vp Gal. 5. shall not attaine to the kingdome of God. And that we must be presented before the iudgement seat of Christ and euery man receiue particularly according as he hath done in this life good or euill: euery man shal receiue according to his works: and that God spared not the Angels when they sinned: &

2. Cor. 5.
Ier. 2.
Apoca. 20
2. Pet. 2.
1 Pet. 4.

if

if the iust shall scarce be saued, where shal the wicked man and sinner appeare.

When all these, & a great deale more, describing & setting forth vnto vs the rigor of Gods seuere iustice, & the reckoning whereunto we shal be called, shal be put into our minds on our death-beds; & that damned Sathan which all the daies of our liues before laboured to make vs careles & negligent of the knowledge, or consideration of any of these things, that so he might make vs the more boldly & blindly to run headlong into sinne, shall charge vs with this, and much more like stuffe, appealing to our owne consciences for witnes heereof, and so heerupon plant in our hearts deepe Desperation: Alas in what case shall our poore soules then stand? Would a man then for a thousand worlds, and all the profits and pleasures thereof be brought to such a quandary?

O thou therefore that readest or hearest this damnable and miserable state that silly soules may be implunged into, for the better auoyding of these perills, read and read againe, meditate, ponder, and put in practise the direction, aduice,

and counsell in the beginning of this present sixt Chapter.

The example of Ioseph of Arimathia most worthy to be imitated.

And take this lesson of Ioseph of Arimathia, that like as hee in his life time had made a ready Sepulcre in the midst of his Garden, which was the place of his pleasure (as all Gardens of great men most commonly are) euen so thou in the midst of these thinges wherein thou takest thy greatest felicity and delight, remember yet thy graue, and what one day (thou knowest not how soone) shall become of thy poore soule, & afterward of thy soule and body for euer.

The vse & custome of the Egyptians.

Remember and learne likewise at the Egiptians, who perceiuing the mindfulnes of death to be a good helpe to bridle their euill actions, vsed to bring a Picture or Image resembling death, into their great and sollemne Feasts; which fearefull and vgly sight, trembling and shaking, they tooke to bee a speciall occasion to keepe the beholders in sobriety, by the remembrance of their end, which they must all come vnto sooner or later.

The notable & immitable example of King Ezechias.

And finally, learne at the good king Ezechias, when thou shalt be by any occasion put in remembrance of death,

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be affraid of Gods threatning, & sorrow a little before hand, least thou bee constrained to sorrow, howle, and cry remedilesse alwayes afterwards; for according to the old saying, Qui ante non cauebit post dolebit, he that wil not beware before shall afterward bee sorrye, & he that in all his doings remembreth the end, shal neuer lightly do amisse. The which wise remembrance of our endes, he vouchsafe to plant in our hearts, who hath full dearely bought vs, Iesus Christ the righteous, to whom with his, and our heauenly father, and the holy spirit three persons; and one eternall maiesty of God-head, all worthy glory, honour, and praise, be worthily attributed, for euer and euer

Amen.

Ecclesiast. 7.40.

## CHAP. 7

The seauenth Chapter containing the Generall Preseruatiue against the despaire or doubting of Gods mercy arising vppon any cause whatsoeuer.

FOr as much as it is a thing manifestly to be proued by holy Scriptures, that a man indued with true faith it selfe may not withstanding now and then be troubled and assaulted with motions of doubtings wauering; yea and of despairing: therefore for the bridling, suppressing and ouercomming of these assaults, it shall be good to put in practise these fiue things especially.

The first preseruatiue against Despaire.

First, we are to thinke and consider thus much, that as not to murther, not to steale, not to commit adultery, and all the rest of the Decalogue or ten Commandements, are the Commandements of God, and we are carefull, and striue with our selues that we should not breake any of thē; least that in breaking any of them, wee should so highly offend God, that he would therefore

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power downe vpon vs his heauy wrath and in his indignation seuerely punish vs as by many examples we see he hath done to others in the like offences: So also it is Gods commandement as well as any of the others are, That wee beleeue in the name of his son Iesus Christ: and therefore we must thinke we offend against God as grieuously, or rather far more grieuously in violating and breaking this Commandement by incredulity, doubting, wauering and despairing as if we should shed mans blood, commit whoredome, theft, periury, or any other such like notorious sinne. 1 Iohn 3. 23.

O what a hainous sinne must it needs be to cast no doubtes, nor dispaire in the helpe of a mortall man in the time of neede: and yet to mistrust and despaire of the like in God? As for example, wee can settle our hearts to beleeue in our mortall fathers if wee stand in neede of meat, drinke or clothes, wee then call on them, and if they promise vs any such thinges, we can set our hearts at ease, & count it as a thing done; we doubt no thing of their good will towards vs nor of the performance, of their word vnto vs,

An example that many men put more trust in mortall man then in God.

vs, we depend vpon them, we relye only on them & none other, and what they giue their word to do for vs, wee make as sure reckoning of it, as if it were already in our hands.

Another example shewing that many men put more trust in mortall man then in God.

Againe, if wee stand in néed of a peece of money as of x. l. xx. l. xxx. l. or be it more or lesse, to discharge some dangerous bond, or for any such like vse by a set day, or to saue our bodies out of prison; & in the meane time, before the day appointed come, some one of our honest rich neighbors, that is counted an honest substanciall man, & of good credit, promise vs certainely so much mony as we want, and stand in need of to serue our turne with, & bids vs trust vnto it that before that day hee will be sure to helpe; we heerevpon trust his honest promise, we beleeue his word, & make as sure account of it as if we had it already in our purses, and take no more thought nor care for it. O how much more should we trust Gods most faithfull, iust, and true word and promise; beleeue him without all distrust, doubting, or dispaire, & depend vpon him who is a thousand times more able and more willing to doe vs

good, and to keepe touch with vs, then euer was, or euer shall bee any mortall earthly father or friendly neighbour?

The second thing in this case to bee considered of, is that euery one of vs, is particularly to beleeue that hee is in the number of thē that shall be saued, by the merits of Christs death and passion: for the promises of saluation in Christ are indefinite, excluding no particular man, as for example, God so loued the world, that he gaue his only begottē son, to the end that all that beleeue in him should not perish but haue life euerlasting. In wō generall words is included euery particular beléeuing persō, although he haue not his name seuerally & particularly set down: & here God excludeth none from his promise vnles through their vnbeleefe & despaire they exclude their owne selues. If the King of Great Brittaine of his owne méere mercy & motion of compassion, or at the sute and mediation of some Noble-man or other that is deare vnto him, should freely pardon and forgiue all the malefactors and prisoners of any Gaile, within his kingdoms, may we not account them very fond & foolish

The second generall help against desperation.

Ioh. 3. 16.

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men, and not worthy the benifit of the Kings gratious Pardon, if some two or three should doubt and despaire that this generall Pardon appertaineth not vnto them, because their owne particular and seuerall names were not therein specified and expressed: Euen thus is our case.

Let not therfore any illusion of Sathan nor feare of our owne vnworthines, nor want of our particular names, nor any other argument or reason whatsoeuer, withdraw vs from challēging our own portions and parts of Gods most mercifull promises, of his free pardon, and remission of our sins: Let vs not doubt nor distrust the performance and truth of Gods promisses.

The third generall helpe against desperation.

Thirdly, to comfort our selues, and to suppresse Satans temptations to despairing, we may further meditate and ponder with our selues these two poynts especially: First that seeing the Lord hath promised to forgiue vs our sinnes; and to put all our wickednes out of his remēbrance (as by plaine and most manifest euidence of holy scriptures it may easily be proued) then it standeth with his iust-

ice

ice and truth, to performe the same, and that vpon such a necessity, that hee must either forgiue vs our offences according to his own worde, or els we must count him vnfaithfull for the breach of his promises; or els, (which were horrible to thinke) iudge him an hippocrite or a dissembler, if he shoulo pretend one thing, and intend another; or at the least-wise vnconstant in altering & changing that which hee hath spoken with his owne mouth, & so to be thought (which is monstrous) to be vniust: for the second point we may consider likewise to our comfort and to the weakning & ouerthrow of all desperat conceits that God hath already punished Iesu Christ for our offences, & therfore cannot in iustice punish them againe in vs. We offended & Christ was punished for the same: Whatsoeuer in iustice God could either demand or man owed, that payed our Lord Christ. Man ought to dy, Christ satisfied for the same: man oughtto haue born the heauy wrath & displeasure of ẏ father; Christ did beare ẏ same: man ought to haue bin cast down into hell, Christ satisfied for that also: yea, hee so fully contented payed & pleased

Esa. 75. Whatsoeuer could be looked for at mans hands, or whatsoeuer man could bee charged with, that Christ performed & discharged

sed God the Father, for all whatsoeuer the Lord could looke for at mans hands that the father himselfe acknowledged, and in thunder from heauen confessed the same, in the hearing of many witnesses present; and hearing the same at the baptizing of our Lord Christ by Iohn Baptist in the flood Iorden: and so all faithfull beleeuers heereof, are heereby fully and freely acquitte and discharged from all debt of sin they owed vnto God for euer.

Why shouldst thou then, O Sathan; so busily charge vs with any such matter to driue vs into desperation, seeing that Sublata causa, tollitur etiam et effectus? The cause whereby thou so vrgest desperation by Iesus Christ being taken away the effects also must needs then cease.

The 4. generall help for the auoyding of despairing.

The fourth thing to be vsed and practised for the better auoyding of despaire is that at what time soeuer we feele our hearts through Sathans crafty suggestion assaulted and molested with this venomous sting of desperation, we should then straight conuey our selues into some quiet and secret place, and there in some humble manner powre out our

hearts

harts before God with inward harty & zelous prayer desiring him of his infinit mercies, to worke in our harts increase of faith, and to suppresse and vanquish all our vnbeleefe, and vtterly to expell from thence all despaire.

The fift and last remedie that now I purpose to handle heere against Desperation, is that we frame our selues carefully, dilligently, and with godly zeale to vse, and often-times to frequent such godly meanes as God hath appointed and set forth vnto vs, for the obtaining and increasing of faith, as (ouer and besides earnest prayer last before spoken of) the vse of reuerent reading, hearing, and meditating of Gods word, and the receiuing of the Sacraments, being holy Signes, and as it were Seales seene with our outward or bodily eyes, which inwardly doe signifie, and set forth to our hearts the secret and inward graces of GOD.

The fift generall helpe against desperation.

FINIS.